

South Dakota WIOA Unified State Plan

Under the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**, the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans

CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS	6
a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis	6
b) State Strategic Vision and Goals	23
c) State Strategy	25
III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS	29
a) State Strategy Implementation	29
b) State Operating Systems and Policies	37
IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS	53
V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs)	53
VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS	54
a) General Requirements	54
b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements	56
c) Youth Program Requirements	63
d) Single-area State requirements	66
e) Waiver Requests	71
WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM	76
ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM	88
Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)	97
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	98
APPENDIX	184

Formatting Key:

I. SECTION HEADING

- a) **U.S. DOL Section Subheading**
U.S. DOL information/narrative requirements

South Dakota Heading

South Dakota narrative and *narrative emphasis* [reference](#)

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The strategic workforce vision of the State of South Dakota is to collaborate amongst government agencies, educators, businesses, and communities to develop a skilled workforce for employers in South Dakota. As South Dakota aligns efforts to make this vision a reality, three main goals will be the focus of workforce efforts as outlined in the 2020 Unified State Plan under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Informed Decisions and Career Pathway Guidance

The first goal of South Dakota's Unified Workforce Plan is to prepare residents of South Dakota to make informed decisions and provide support during the career pathway journey. The South Dakota Workforce Development Council (WDC), South Dakota's Workforce Investment Board, has identified the following priorities to successfully meet this goal:

- Engage youth in the workforce and ensure their awareness of the variety of educational and workforce options;
- Educate parents about the variety of educational and workforce options for their children; and
- Build a curriculum to assist schools in preparing youth for the workforce.

The South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) continues the commitment to engage youth, parents, and educators to meet workforce needs. Reaching the next generation in South Dakota starts with meeting youth as early as possible by using partnerships with the education agencies and leaders in South Dakota. The South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), the DLR, and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) providers will offer **joint presentations** to educators with labor market resources and toolkits. In addition, DLR will seek opportunities to develop resources highlight labor market information for students and parents.

WIOA Title I Youth statewide funding is being utilized in partnership with the DOE Career and Technical Education Division to support 11 DLR staff located in local school districts across the state. The primary responsibility of these **Career Launch SD Career Advisors** is to increase work-based learning opportunities for students. Work-based learning builds awareness of career options, especially those in South Dakota, resulting in informed decisions about career and educational pathways. To broaden the impact and reach of the Career Advisors, a regional model will be implemented as part of the WIOA Unified State Plan, with one Career Advisor serving several school districts. Each advisor will assist school districts in developing work-based learning opportunities, provide classroom presentations, coordinate business speakers, job shadows, internships, and industry tours. Career Advisors will also provide one-on-one career guidance and enroll eligible youth into the Title I program. [III.a\)2.\(B\)](#)

South Dakota Governor Noem has identified the week of April 20 – 24, 2020, as the **South Dakota Week of Work** in partnership with DLR, DOE, and South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), to promote work-based learning. The Week of Work will be filled with job shadows, industry tours, and classroom presentations by businesses for all high school sophomores statewide. Businesses will register to host an event and schools are asked to complete assessments with their students to connect them with the right industry. DLR hopes to catalyze partnerships between educators and businesses in further workforce development efforts; and continue the Week of Work as an annual event. [III.a\)2.\(B\)](#)

To better connect students in the public schools with businesses, DLR, in partnership with the Department of Education is working with a public university to build a **Future Workforce Finder**. This database will allow businesses to identify work-based learning opportunities they are willing to offer student such as job shadows, internships, classroom presentations, or industry tours. School personnel will then be able to search this database for opportunities in their area for their students based on their student's interests.

South Dakota continues to lead the country in taking advantage of the U.S. DOL State Apprenticeship Expansion Grants. In 2020, DLR will implement **Registered Apprenticeship Pathways Program** to give South Dakota high school students the opportunity to concurrently earn high school credit, Registered Apprenticeship hours, post-secondary credit, and on-

the-job experience. Priority for funding will be offered to programs with occupations in high demand in South Dakota. DLR used July 1, 2019 funding to increase programs, develop a pathway program for high school students, and offset costs for existing Registered Apprenticeship programs. DLR will provide the technical assistance to create four Registered Apprenticeship Pathway Programs by the 2021-2022 school year. ^{VI.b)2.}

In partnership with DOE, DLR is using grant funding to build materials teachers or DLR Career Advisors can be utilized in the classroom of our public schools to increase **student's awareness of Registered Apprenticeships** as a post-secondary option.

Based on an expressed need for soft skills from employers, DLR partnered with school districts to offer a hands-on **soft skills training** called *Bring Your 'A' Game to Work*, designed to teach foundational behaviors and values for employment. Participants discover these skills through activities and group participation with an emphasis on the seven soft skill behaviors determined to be the most important: attendance, appearance, attitude, ambition, accountability, acceptance, and appreciation. This workshop is offered to both middle and high school students in South Dakota, providing the upcoming workforce with invaluable skills to meet the growing demand. DLR will make efforts to reach 1,400 students each school year with *Bring Your 'A' Game* curriculum. In Program Year 2020, this was expanded to include *Bring Your 'A' Game Anywhere*, a self-guided virtual e-learning course. This course has allowed increased accessibility to this curriculum.

While many students preparing for their high school equivalency with AEL programs are also enrolled in WIOA Title I programs, enrollment could improve. DLR will coordinate efforts to pilot a project to offer a **part-time Work Experience for those attending AEL between the ages of 16 and 24** for secondary preparation through the WIOA Title I program concurrently with their studies. If successful, a similar model with English Language Learners may also be established. In addition to providing career exploration and hands on work experience for these individuals, WIOA Title I may offer financial supports such as daycare or transportation to improve educational outcomes. DLR will strive to increase co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and Title II for those ages 16 through 24 from 14% of Title II participants per program year to 20% by 2024. In Program Year 2020, DLR is committed to serving at least 20 of these co-enrolled participants with a Work Experience or Job Shadow to compliment the high school equivalency classroom schedule. As the co-enrollment numbers increase, DLR will annually reevaluate this goal for each program year.

Business Engagement

The second goal under the vision of the Unified Workforce Plan focuses on South Dakota businesses and employers. DLR will increase partnerships with businesses to discover opportunities and identify solutions to address workforce needs by prioritizing relationship building with business and industry organizations and engaging businesses to assist in educating youth and parents about workforce opportunities.

The number of workforce programs offered by South Dakota government agencies can be confusing for employers to decipher and understand. DLR and the South Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) WIOA Title IV will **streamline business engagement** and services as part of the WIOA Unified State Plan by offering joint DHS and DLR training for business engagement and more opportunities for businesses to learn more about services.

At the end of 2019, DLR held a lean event, called a kaizen, to review the current **business engagement practices** in One-Stop Career Centers statewide. The workgroup documented several areas of opportunity and improvement. After the completion of Business U training and certification surrounding business engagement, DLR and DHS staff will work to develop training to build the confidence for One-Stop Career Center staff as they work with businesses to resolve their workforce needs by creating: [III.a\)2.\(D\)](#)

- Speaking points and an engagement plan for each community;
- Training to emphasize the importance of documenting business services to improve reporting accuracy; and
- A Customer Relationship Module to identify engagement and measure efforts with businesses not registered in SDWORKS.

Recognizing this need, DLR has established a team of Job Service Staff throughout the state to develop a **Business**

Engagement and Services Team (BEST). The BEST meets frequently with program leadership to learn tips and develop tools to move relationships with businesses from transactional to transformational. Our goal is to equip staff with the comfort to start with relationships building to learn of employer's needs, then determine what services DLR can offer or connect employers to.

Recognizing the need to support businesses as they build relationships in their workforce, DLR utilized grant funding to develop a **Workplace Mentoring Toolkit**. The toolkit includes training for mentors to build their skills to coach and develop apprentices and new employees. Future efforts include sharing this resource with employers in the state through virtual informational meetings.

Citizens in South Dakota have long requested a user-friendly method of identifying Registered Apprenticeship opportunities available. DLR is conducting outreach to Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to seek their approval for inclusion on a **StartTodaySD Apprenticeship Finder**.

In partnership with the Department of Education, DLR is utilizing U.S. DOL grant funding and Governor's Emergency Education Relief funding to foster relationships between state technical colleges, industry associations, and businesses to build **Registered Apprenticeship programs in STEM industries**.

Continuous Improvement

South Dakota's third goal surrounding the Unified State Plan is to engage a system of continuous improvement to ensure the alignment of workforce services. To do this, South Dakota must ensure coordination and collaboration with partner agencies and community partners.

South Dakota will improve **data sharing** among case management information systems impacting the four core programs under WIOA. [III.b\)6](#). Three different case management information systems are used by these four programs, each designed to meet the needs of the programs it serves. Sharing reporting elements will offer significant improvements to customer service, guidance to customers, federal and state reporting and performance, and communication between agencies. DLR will strategize with the South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) and system vendors to develop electronic referral processes, combine or coordinate payroll features for work experiences, and improve the collection of unemployment insurance wage records from other states. Current efforts are in place to improve data sharing among secondary students, Board of Technical Education, Board of Regents, and DLR. Data share agreements and a data matching process are being explored.

A DLR partnership with the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) offers job search assistance, the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), and high school equivalency prep courses to inmates. Through a review of collaboration, DLR and DOC have established joint office hours to better engage and retain **ex-offenders** in the workforce to reduce recidivism rates. DLR is working to implement a **Federal Bonding Program** through a federal grant and WIOA Title I Support Service funding. A partnership with the Department of Education, Board-of Technical Education, technical colleges, and DLR, has focused on increasing availability of short-term credentials coupled with related on-the-job opportunities for inmates in South Dakota's prison system, prior to release.

To expand access to rural areas of our state, DLR utilized the opportunity presented by the COVID-19 pandemic to implement a Virtual Job Service. Using technology already available and teamwork, DLR created a space for customers to submit paperwork online, complete the orientation and enrollment into workforce programs remotely, and virtually receive case management or attend Job Search Workshops. DLR looks to expand on this foundation with a goal of increased access.

DLR strives to be the workforce services hub for South Dakota citizens and employers. To accomplish this, DLR has identified the follow strategies:

- Meet customers where they are with the option of virtual or in-person meetings and services.

- Provide guidance and training for staff to increase comfortability in all programs they are eligible for to increase access to services and funding.
- Create statewide positions to alleviate the burden of administrative processes and increase staff capacity.
- Empower One-Stop Career Centers with Action plan development and implementation, something we plan to continue in future years.

This improved workflow meets our customers' needs and increases staff capacity to engage with business, build partnerships, and provide more active case management to their participants.

Job Service Offices have been challenged to create Action Plans that identify intentional goals related to:

- Learning about the needs of businesses and partner with them to resolve their workforce needs;
- Intertwining DLR services within partners' processes to reduce duplication and offer a cohesive and comprehensive service delivery;
- Adjusting DLR's service delivery to meet the needs of partners and customers; And
- Identifying and engaging veterans in need of workforce services.

DLR recently implemented a module in SDWORKS to help streamline the process for providers to apply for the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and submit required data in a secure manner. Continued goals include developing guidance and training for Job Service Office staff and potential providers throughout the state.

South Dakota is a U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship state and will continue efforts to train One-Stop Career Center staff to engage with businesses and discuss **Registered Apprenticeship** opportunities for their workforce. While DLR staff do not have the expertise of the U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship State Director, they can assist in laying the foundation and offer as much assistance as possible to reduce the bottleneck historical frustrations with the federal Registered Apprenticeship model. DLR will measure success in this facet by an increase in Registered Apprenticeship programs, in both amount and variety, in South Dakota.

South Dakota will ensure **continuous collaboration** by holding annual meetings among WIOA partner programs to identify collaborative efforts, best practices, and areas for improvement. Locally, workforce partner meetings will take place quarterly and engage partners in local efforts impacting their workforce such as policy changes, training needs and opportunities, housing and transportation solutions. At the state level, the Core Partner Alignment Consortium [IV](#) (CPAC), comprised of staff from the six core programs will meet on a regular basis. The objective of each effort to bring partners together is to improve information sharing to benefit case management, increase engagement and services to rural areas, and coordinated efforts while preventing duplication of services.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

1. *Economic and Workforce Analysis*

- (A) *Economic Analysis. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include—*
- (i) *Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.*
 - (ii) *Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.*
 - (iii) *Employers' Employment Needs. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.*
 - (iv) *Skill Gaps. Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.*

As a measure of existing demand, tabulations by industry of jobs advertised online in 2020 indicate the South Dakota industries with the greatest existing need for workers are Health Care and Social Assistance; Administrative and Support, and Waste Management and Remediation; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Public Administration. Each of these sectors individually accounted for more than 5% of total job openings listed online (for which industry was listed) in the state in 2020 and accounted for more than 40% of job openings when combined. The online jobs data was extracted from the South Dakota virtual labor market data system in November 2021.

Identifying **existing occupational demand** and skills currently in demand using industry data alone can be difficult because of the mix of occupations in any industry. Tabulations by occupation of jobs posted online helps outline skill demands. Data on 2020 job openings in South Dakota by broad occupational group indicate the greatest current demand include: Healthcare Practitioners and Technical; Office and Administrative Support; Management; Transportation and Material Moving; Sales and Related; Production; and Healthcare Support. Each of these groups accounted for more than 5% of 2020 total job openings by occupational group. Combined, they account for nearly 70% of the job openings.

Comparing specific occupations within these groups with the most job openings provides greater insight into the skills and abilities most in demand in the recent labor market. This report reviews occupations within each of these groups that accounted for 2% or more of all 2020 job openings within the broader group.

In the **Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations** group, the highest demand occupation was Registered Nurses, with 14,382 openings advertised online in 2020 (about 45% of all openings listed within this occupational group). Other specific occupations for which listed job openings made up 2% or more of all openings in the occupational group were: Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (3,459 openings), Physicians and Surgeons (2,731 openings), Family and General Practitioners (1,020 openings), Occupational Therapists (800 openings), All Other Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (756 openings),

Industry	Job Openings
Total, All Industries	177,118
Health Care and Social Assistance	36,861
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	9,976
Manufacturing	9,561
Retail Trade	9,398
Public Administration	8,986
Transportation and Warehousing	6,883
Finance and Insurance	6,333
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,955
Educational Services	5,579
Wholesale Trade	4,624

Source: Virtual labor market data system, Labor Market Information Center, SD Department of Labor and Regulation, Nov. 2021.

Occupational Group	Job Openings
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	31,967
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	10,595
Management Occupations	9,179
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	9,015
Sales and Related Occupations	8,841
Production Occupations	6,586
Healthcare Support Occupations	6,023
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	4,505
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	4,254
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	3,667

Source: Virtual labor market data system, Labor Market Information Center, SD Department of Labor and Regulation, Nov. 2021.

Physical Therapists (722 openings), and Speech-Language Pathologists (703).

In the **Office and Administrative Support Occupations** group, the highest demand occupation was Customer Service Representatives, with 3,334 openings advertised online in 2020 (more than 31% of all openings listed within this occupational group). Other specific occupations with notable job openings listed were: Customer Service Representatives (3,344 openings), Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants (922 openings), Patient Representatives (614 openings), Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks (559 openings), Stock Clerks- Stockroom, Warehouse, or Storage Yard (470 openings), Tellers (430 openings), Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks (398 openings), Receptionists and Information Clerks (349 openings), First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers (262 openings), Bill and Account Collectors (256 openings), Office Clerks, General (242 openings) and Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks (223 openings).

Among the **Management Occupations**, the highest demand occupation based on job openings online in 2020 was Sales Managers, accounting for 1,016 openings and 11% of all openings within the group. Other specific occupations which accounted for 2% or more of all openings within this group were: Sales Managers (1,016 openings), Managers, All Other (853 openings), General and Operations Managers (825 openings), Medical and Health Services Managers (437 openings), Construction Managers (244 openings), Chief Executives (240 openings), Financial Managers, Branch or Department (224 openings) and Food Service Managers (187 openings).

In the **Transportation and Material Moving Occupations** group, the highest demand occupation was Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, with 2,897 openings, accounting for nearly one-third of all openings within the group. Other specific occupations with notable openings were: Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (1,617 openings), Driver/Sales Workers (1,113 openings), Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers (517 openings) and Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators (217 openings).

Retail Salespersons had more openings (2,109) advertised online during 2020 than any other occupation in the **Sales and Related Occupations** group, accounting for almost a quarter of all openings in the group. Other occupations in which openings accounted for at least 2% of 2020 openings were: Insurance Sales Agents (1,522 openings), First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (997 openings), Cashiers (693 openings), Sales Representatives, Services, All Other (410 openings), Parts Salespersons (231 openings) and Sales and Related Workers, All Other (196 openings).

Among **Production Occupations**, Production Workers, All Other led the way in job openings advertised online in 2018 at 1,226, accounting for about 19% of all Production Worker openings. Other occupations accounting for 2% or more of openings in the group were: First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers (586 openings), Welders, Cutters, and Welder Fitters (512 openings), Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers (298 openings), Helpers--Production Workers (258 openings), Machinists (202 openings), Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators (180 workers), Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other (169 openings) and Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers (137 openings).

The final occupational group accounting for at least 5% of total job openings advertised online in South Dakota in 2020 was the **Healthcare Support Occupations** group, which had 6,023 openings. The Nursing Assistant occupation accounted for the majority of these openings (more than 63%), with 3,834 openings in 2020. Other Healthcare Support occupations account for 2% or more of openings in this group were: Medical Assistants (377 openings), Healthcare Support Workers, All Other (364 openings), Home Health Aides (309 openings), Physical Therapist Assistants (247 openings), Occupational Therapy Assistants (226 openings) and Phlebotomists (137 openings).

Industry employment projections indicate the emerging demand by industry, showing which industries are projected to grow most rapidly. From 2018 to 2028, the total number of workers in South Dakota is projected to increase by 34,663 (7.1%, or 0.7% annually) to a total of 526,251 workers from 2018 to 2028. South Dakota's growth rate is trending faster than the projected national rate. On the national level, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the total employment level is expected to reach about 169.4 million (growth of 0.5% annually). The nation's slower growth rate is attributed to slower population growth and changing demographics.

The South Dakota projections include three categories of workers: non-agricultural self-employed and unpaid family

workers; agriculture and related workers (farm employment); and nonfarm wage and salaried workers.

The **nonfarm wage and salaried workers** category includes only those wage and salaried workers covered under the South Dakota Reemployment Assistance (RA) program and those who work for non-profit organizations, such as private colleges and religious organizations. Nonfarm wage and salaried workers are the major element of South Dakota's labor force, making up 88.7%. This group is also projected to have the highest growth, with a 7.4% rise projected by 2028.

Another important element of South Dakota's labor force is **agriculture and related workers (farm employment)**. This category is expected to grow slightly, from 31,955 to 33,077 by 2028 (3.5%). The agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sector in South Dakota is projected to have an annual growth rate of 0.35% in the next decade, remaining relatively stationary. South Dakota farms have been trending toward larger operations for years, with consolidation of smaller farms and greater production continuing. The final component of South Dakota's labor force is the **non-agricultural self-employed and unpaid family worker** category. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and based on Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey data, self-employed persons are individuals who work for profit or fees in their own business, profession, trade or farm. The smallest portion (4.8%) of South Dakota's labor force is expected to have a growth rate of 5.4% (0.5% annually) in the coming decade.

South Dakota Wage and Salaried Workers by Industry Division 2018-2028				
Industry Title	2018 Workers	2028 Workers	Actual Change	Percent Growth
Total of All Industries	491,588	526,251	34,663	7.1%
Non-agricultural Self-employed and Unpaid Family Workers	23,441	24,711	1,270	5.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (Farm Employment)	31,955	33,077	1,122	3.5%
Nonfarm Total Wage and Salaried Workers (excludes Self-employed and Unpaid Family Workers)	436,192	468,463	32,271	7.4%

Source: Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, November 2021

South Dakota Industries Projected to Grow the Fastest 2018-2028

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) groups businesses based on the products they make or the services they provide. **NAICS** uses a 6-digit coding taxonomy, with each increasing digit level identifying a greater level of specialization. For example, at the two-digit NAICS level, there are 20 broadly categorized sectors—such as Accommodation and Food Services (NAICS code 72). Businesses are then classified into more specific categories within a sector, represented by codes up to six digits.

South Dakota employment projections are published at the three-digit NAICS level, called subsectors. The remainder of this section explore the South Dakota employment growth projected to 2028 at that subsector level.

South Dakota Industry Employment Projections 2018-2028 Top Ten in Percentage Industry Growth					
NAICS Code	Industry Title	2018 Workers	2028 Workers	Actual Change	Percent Growth
712	Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institution	635	766	131	20.6%
551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	5,265	6,080	815	15.5%
492	Couriers and Messengers	1,684	1,944	260	15.4%
493	Warehousing and Storage	831	955	124	14.9%
562	Waste Management and Remediation Service	929	1,062	133	14.3%
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,594	4,099	505	14.1%
488	Support Activities for Transportation	988	1,122	134	13.6%
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	14,053	15,894	1,841	13.1%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	17,468	19,711	2,243	12.8%
311	Food Manufacturing	10,280	11,593	1,313	12.8%

Notes:
Data is preliminary and subject to revision.
Data for industries with 2018 employment less than 200 not included. Data presented for industries will not sum to totals due to non-publishable data for additional industries being included in totals.
[Industry Codes and Industry Titles are based largely on the North American Industry Classification System.](#)
Source: Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, November 2021

Noteworthy occurrences within the more detailed four-digit NAICS having a substantial impact on employment levels at the subsector level are mentioned. Industries projected to grow the fastest, those with the greatest percentage growth projected, are the focus of these report.

The number of workers employed in South Dakota's ***Museums, Historical Sites and Similar Institutions*** subsector is projected to increase by 131 workers (or 20.6%). Industries in this subsector engage in the preservation and exhibition of objects, sites and natural

wonders of historical, cultural and/or educational value. Some examples of South Dakota entities in this industry are the Crazy Horse Memorial, The Children's Museum of South Dakota, Reptile Gardens and other zoos and museums around the state. The demand in this subsector is driven by tourism and visitor spending.

Visitor spending increased statewide by \$272.72 million (7.4%) from 2014 to 2018 in South Dakota, according to the South Dakota Department of Tourism. In particular, the Black Hills and Badlands Region made up almost 40% of total statewide visitor spending, increasing \$101.96 million or 7% since 2014. Sightseeing in the Black Hills and Badlands and the Sturgis Bike Rally and similar events generate visitor spending, positively impacting this industry and driving the need for more workers on a seasonal basis.

The ***Management of Companies and Enterprises*** subsector is projected to add 815 workers in South Dakota (15.5% increase) over the projections cycle. This subsector is comprised of establishments that administer, oversee and manage the strategic or organizational planning and decision-making role of a company or enterprise. South Dakota experienced a 23.2% increase in the number of companies in this subsector from 2008 to 2018. The favorable business and tax environment and central geographic location has played a role in attracting businesses to headquarter their corporate offices and establishments in South Dakota. According to the South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development, South Dakota's private business sector has seen 136.6% growth in Gross Domestic Product since 2000, the sixth highest growth in the nation.

The number of workers in South Dakota's ***Couriers and Messengers*** subsector is projected to increase by 260 workers (or 15.4%) over the next 10 years. This subsector is comprised of entities that provide intercity, local and/or international delivery of parcels and documents (including express delivery services) without operating under a universal service obligation. Since 2008 the number of workers has dramatically risen from 1,287 to 1,684 in 2018. The increasing demand from consumers shopping online has a direct relationship with the increase in demand for workers to deliver those goods. Retail is trending more toward online services rather than the brick and mortar stores of the past. Shoppers tend to prefer the convenience of shopping online via mobile devices or computers rather than having to make a trip to a store to obtain goods.

Establishments in the ***Warehousing and Storage*** industry group are engaged in operating warehousing and storage facilities for general merchandise, refrigerated goods and other warehouse products. Establishments in Warehousing and Storage may also provide a range of services, often referred to as logistics, related to the distribution of goods. The number of workers employed in the Warehousing and Storage subsector is projected to rise by 124 workers (or 14.9%) over the next 10 years in South Dakota. As companies try to get their products to their final destinations in the most cost effective, convenient and organized way, the demand grows for workers to help accomplish this goal. This subsector is not driven by the goods they are selling or retailing, but rather by sales from other companies for which this subsector stores and arranges the distribution of those goods.

South Dakota Industry Employment Projections 2018-2028					
Top Ten in Percentage Industry Growth					
NAICS Code	Industry Title	2018 Workers	2028 Workers	Actual Change	Percent Growth
712	Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institution	635	766	131	20.6%
551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	5,265	6,080	815	15.5%
492	Couriers and Messengers	1,684	1,944	260	15.4%
493	Warehousing and Storage	831	955	124	14.9%
562	Waste Management and Remediation Service	929	1,062	133	14.3%
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,594	4,099	505	14.1%
488	Support Activities for Transportation	988	1,122	134	13.6%
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	14,053	15,894	1,841	13.1%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	17,468	19,711	2,243	12.8%
311	Food Manufacturing	10,280	11,593	1,313	12.8%

Notes:
Data is preliminary and subject to revision.
Data for industries with 2018 employment less than 200 not included. Data presented for industries will not sum to totals due to non-publishable data for additional industries being included in totals.
[Industry Codes and Industry Titles are based largely on the North American Industry Classification System.](#)
Source: Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, November 2021

The **Waste Management and Remediation Services** industry group in South Dakota is expected to increase by 133 workers (or 14.3%) by 2028. This subsector is engaged in the collection, treatment and disposal of waste materials. Waste collection and remediation are expected to be driving forces. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates South Dakota's population rose from 816,166 to 878,698 from 2010 to 2018, an increase of 62,532 (7.7%) people. An increasing population generates more waste and an increased need for workers to pick up and properly dispose of that waste.

Projected Occupational Demand in South Dakota

Employment projections by occupation include not only employment levels expected in the coming decade, but a more complete indicator of demand for workers. Demand projections include the following components:

- **Number of openings created due to employment change** represents the difference between the base employment in an occupation and the projection; if the projection for an occupation is negative, then openings due to change are set to zero. This includes employment level changes due to business expansion, as well as changes in staffing patterns for an industry. For example, several years ago hospitals began hiring a higher proportion of registered nurses and fewer LPNs to maximize the skills available in return for expenditures on personnel costs, to help meet record keeping requirements and to help ensure they were offering the highest level of healthcare possible.
- **Number of openings created by the need to replace individuals exiting the labor force entirely** (for reasons including retirement and death, etc.) is estimated by multiplying occupational employment estimates by national exit rates supplied by the BLS. Labor force exits are more common at older ages as workers retire, but can occur at any age.
- **Number of openings created by the need to replace individuals transferring occupations** is estimated by multiplying occupational employment estimates by national occupational transfer rates supplied by the BLS. The occupational transfer rates reflect workers who permanently leave one occupation to enter another occupation. This estimate of openings does not count workers who change jobs but remain in the same occupation.

Total openings are the summation of openings due to each of the three categories listed above. Annualized results are calculated by dividing by 10, the number of years in the respective projection period. The table below shows the 10 occupations in which workers are projected to be in the greatest demand in South Dakota through 2028.

DLR uses occupational demand projections and occupational wage data when making funding determinations for training services and educational programs. Together, these measures of employment opportunity and earnings potential provide a helpful indicator of return on investment.

Hot Career and Top 30 Careers

The list of **Hot Careers** was identified by LMIC in the fall of 2020 using the latest employment projections (2018-2028) and wage data (2019) available at the time. To be considered a "Hot Career," an occupation met the following criteria:

- projected to show employment growth to 2028.
- have projected annual openings (a measure of demand for workers) greater than the average across all

South Dakota Occupations Projected to be in Greatest Demand 2018-2028

Occupational Title	2018 Workers	2028 Workers	Numeric Change 2018-2028	Annual Demand Due to			
				Employment Growth	Labor Force Exits	Occupational Transfer	Total
Total, All Occupations	491,588	526,251	34,663	3,466	23,129	36,069	62,664
Retail Salespersons	16,138	17,072	934	93	954	1,471	2,518
Cashiers	12,654	12,868	214	21	1,139	1,268	2,428
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	8,845	10,432	1,587	159	768	948	1,875
Waiters and Waitresses	7,511	7,963	452	45	537	948	1,530
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	9,650	10,623	973	97	620	715	1,432
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	10,986	11,000	14	1	669	612	1,282
Customer Service Representatives	8,693	8,702	9	1	418	742	1,161
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	8,645	9,399	754	75	371	654	1,100
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,517	7,198	681	68	310	643	1,021
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	4,066	4,319	253	25	472	438	935

Source: Labor Market Information Center, SD Department of Labor and Regulation

occupations (85) for 2018-2028.

- have an average/mean wage greater than the median wage across all occupations in 2019 (\$34,754).

There were 69 occupations which met this criteria and were identified as “Hot Careers.” Additionally, DLR identified Top 30 careers, those 30 occupations on the Hot Careers which had the greatest projected demand. For each of the Top 30 Careers, the table below shows the 2018-2028 projected employment and outlook information and the 2020 wage data. When the original Top Careers were identified, the most current wage data available (2019) was used, but 2020 wage data is now available and used in the table. Using 2020 data, all of the occupations on the Top 30 Careers list still meet the wage criteria. The median wage across all occupations in 2020 was \$36,823.

South Dakota Hot Careers						
Occupational Title	Total Annual Openings	2016 Workers	2026 Workers	Actual Change 2016-2026	Percent Change 2016-2026	2018 Median Wage
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,005	8,604	9,257	653	7.6	\$39,598
Registered Nurses	837	12,334	14,052	1,718	13.9	\$57,506
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	640	5,650	6,151	501	8.9	\$59,392
Carpenters	639	6,343	6,810	467	7.36	\$35,229
Accountants and Auditors	513	5,073	5,570	497	9.8	\$62,269
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	435	3,813	4,061	248	6.5	\$43,193
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	391	3,150	3,555	405	12.9	\$37,445
General and Operations Managers	380	4,094	4,459	365	8.9	\$111,596
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	324	4,156	4,407	251	6.0	\$42,672
Insurance Sales Agents	315	2,884	3,171	287	10.0	\$50,501
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	313	2,873	3,118	245	8.5	\$36,308
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	301	1,929	2,109	180	9.3	\$33,938
Management Analysts	299	2,935	3,310	375	12.8	\$68,887
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	268	3,509	3,724	215	6.1	\$42,769
Electricians	265	2,288	2,383	95	4.2	\$44,558
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	238	2,364	2,506	142	6.01	\$39,718
Loan Interviewers and Clerks	236	2,105	2,371	266	12.6	\$34,516
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	229	1,904	2,080	176	9.24	\$36,727
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	229	1,976	2,075	99	5.0	\$43,725
Parts Salespersons	226	1,627	1,793	166	10.2	\$35,561
Clergy	209	1,790	1,901	111	6.2	\$45,463
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	190	1,871	1,934	63	3.4	\$47,293
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	187	1,701	1,817	116	6.82	\$38,547
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	187	1,601	1,776	175	10.9	\$74,186
Coaches and Scouts	185	1,245	1,377	132	10.6	\$31,642
Highway Maintenance Workers	173	1,665	1,711	46	2.8	\$34,468
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	170	1,436	1,579	143	10.0	\$41,981
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	166	2,126	2,257	131	6.2	\$43,680
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	157	1,461	1,585	124	8.5	\$61,273
Loan Officers	155	1,620	1,808	188	11.6	\$59,516
Notes:						
Data is preliminary and subject to revision.						
Hot Careers are those which: are projected to show employment growth to 2026; are among the 30 occupations with the highest projected average annual demand for workers to 2026 (or having an average annual demand for workers 155 or greater); and had an average wage more than \$32,338 using 2017 wage data. (In 2017, half of the workers in South Dakota earned \$32,338 or less, and half earned more, making it the median wage.)						
Source: Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, October 2019.						

South Dakota Top 30 Careers High Demand/High Wage Occupations						
Occupational Title	Average Annual Openings	2018 Employment	2028 Employment	Actual Change 2018-2028	Percent Change 2018-2028	2020 Average Annual Wage
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,100	8,645	9,399	754	8.7%	\$43,582
Registered Nurses	907	12,940	14,643	1,703	13.2%	\$59,540
Carpenters	659	5,696	6,160	464	8.2%	\$37,192
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except	655	5,449	6,003	554	10.2%	\$66,191
Accountants and Auditors	538	4,998	5,491	493	9.9%	\$67,472
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	466	4,059	4,190	131	3.2%	\$47,647
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	447	3,387	3,777	390	11.5%	\$35,760
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	432	3,321	3,758	437	13.2%	\$39,453
General and Operations Managers	404	4,038	4,412	374	9.3%	\$128,885
Management Analysts	377	3,334	3,762	428	12.8%	\$77,934
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	349	4,264	4,516	252	5.9%	\$44,109
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	334	3,007	3,294	287	9.5%	\$38,163
Electricians	322	2,464	2,696	232	9.4%	\$46,535
Insurance Sales Agents	296	2,562	2,882	320	12.5%	\$68,952
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	275	3,502	3,718	216	6.2%	\$44,613
Loan Interviewers and Clerks	245	2,001	2,282	281	14.0%	\$36,954
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	244	2,321	2,441	120	5.2%	\$41,238
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	239	2,010	2,195	185	9.2%	\$36,483
Clergy	225	1,860	2,008	148	8.0%	\$48,243
Parts Salespersons	224	1,616	1,800	184	11.4%	\$36,697
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	219	1,684	1,896	212	12.6%	\$44,544
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	213	1,702	1,805	103	6.1%	\$45,398
Highway Maintenance Workers	211	1,796	1,870	74	4.1%	\$36,392
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support	198	1,824	1,875	51	2.8%	\$49,515
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	197	1,533	1,693	160	10.4%	\$35,726
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	195	1,846	1,947	101	5.5%	\$40,664
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	191	1,600	1,753	153	9.6%	\$92,338
Coaches and Scouts	178	1,081	1,201	120	11.1%	\$36,346
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health	176	1,352	1,603	251	18.6%	\$42,672
Loan Officers	175	1,703	1,930	227	13.3%	\$66,682
Source: Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation						

- To delve more deeply into the employment needs of employers (looking at the knowledge, skills, abilities and licensing/certification requirements), Occupational Profiles were developed for each of the Top 30 Careers. Each Occupational Profile, linked below, provides detailed information on the occupation such as knowledge, skill and ability requirements as well as licensing or certification requirements.
- [Accountants and Auditors](#)
- [Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics](#)
- [Carpenters](#)
- [Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers](#)
- [Child, Family, and School Social Workers](#)
- [Clergy](#)
- [Coaches and Scouts](#)
- [Electricians](#)
- [Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education](#)
- [First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers](#)
- [First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers](#)
- [General and Operations Managers](#)

- [Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers](#)
- [Highway Maintenance Workers](#)
- [Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators](#)
- [Insurance Sales Agents](#)
- [Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers](#)
- [Loan Interviewers and Clerks](#)
- [Loan Officers](#)
- [Maintenance and Repair Workers, General](#)
- [Management Analysts](#)
- [Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators](#)
- [Parts Salespersons](#)
- [Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters](#)
- [Registered Nurses](#)
- [Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products](#)
- [Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products](#)
- [Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education](#)
- [Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors](#)
- [Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers](#)

The requirements of each Top 30 Career and the most current information available on employment outlook and worker supply is available within the virtual labor market data system in SDWORKS. In the following list, each Top 30 Career is linked directly to information in the virtual system, including current demand, supply estimates, job openings, wage offered (if listed by the employer), skills, and education specified by the employer.

- [Accountants and Auditors](#)
- [Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics](#)
- [Carpenters](#)
- [Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers](#)
- [Child, Family and School Social Workers](#)
- [Clergy](#)
- [Coaches and Scouts](#)
- [Electricians](#)
- [Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education](#)
- [First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers](#)
- [First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers](#)
- [General and Operations Managers](#)
- [Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers](#)
- [Highway Maintenance Workers](#)
- [Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators](#)
- [Insurance Sales Agents](#)
- [Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers](#)
- [Loan Interviewers and Clerks](#)
- [Loan Officers](#)
- [Maintenance and Repair Workers, General](#)
- [Management Analysts](#)
- [Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators](#)
- [Parts Salespersons](#)
- [Plumbers, Pipefitters and Steamfitters](#)
- [Registered Nurses](#)
- [Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products](#)
- [Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products](#)

- [Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education](#)
- [Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors](#)
- [Welders, Cutters, Solderers and Brazers](#)

- (B) *Workforce Analysis. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other group in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes—*
- (i) *Employment and Unemployment. Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.*
 - (ii) *Labor Market Trends. Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.*
 - (iii) *Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce. Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.*

Population

South Dakota's total population has been steadily increasing since 1990, growing by nearly 200,000 between 1990 and 2020, which amounts to 28%. According to estimates published by the U.S. Census Bureau, our population increased by 77,000 or 9.4% over the last decade between 2010 and 2020 which exceeded the U.S. population increase of 6.5% over the same time period. Some of the largest growth has taken place in our two Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), Rapid City and Sioux Falls. Population in those two metro areas increased by 13.7% and 19.4%, respectively, over the last 10 years. Nearly half of South Dakota's population 427,100 (47.8%) resides in either the Sioux Falls or Rapid City MSAs. Between 2019 and 2020 growth remained consistent in comparison to previous years with the MSA's growing at a slightly faster pace than the rest of the state.

South Dakota Population Estimates			
	2010	2020	Percent Change
United States	309,327,143	329,484,123	6.5%
South Dakota	816,193	892,717	9.4%
Sioux Falls MSA	229,110	273,566	19.4%
Rapid City MSA	135,006	153,531	13.7%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Populations Estimates Program			

Diverse Subpopulation

The 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau shows the largest percent of the state population by race is comprised of White residents (86.7%), followed by American Indian and Alaskan (10.5%). Regarding ethnicity, 3.7% of South Dakota's population is Hispanic or Latino.

Data available from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) for the linguistics of our state population show that a large majority of state residents (94.2%) speak only English. Of those residents which have the ability to speak in other languages (47,700), some struggle with language barriers as an estimated 6,500 (13.7%) speak English 'not well' or 'not well at all'.

South Dakota Population by Race and Ethnicity		
	Number	Percent
Total population	884,659	100.0%
White	766,781	86.7%
Black or African American	26,679	3.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	92,709	10.5%
Asian	14,395	1.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	2,868	0.3%
Some other race	6,973	0.8%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	33,018	3.7%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey		

Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English for the Population 5 Years and Over					
Language Spoken	5 to 17 years	18 to 64 years	65+ years	Total	Percent of total
Total	156,410	515,591	153,799	825,800	100.0%
Speak only English	149,331	481,365	147,365	778,061	94.2%
Speak Spanish:	2,137	12,047	1647	15,831	1.9%
<i>Speak English "very well"</i>	1,125	7,144	842	9,111	1.1%
<i>Speak English "well"</i>	646	2,244	98	2,988	0.4%
<i>Speak English "not well"</i>	366	1,946	615	2,927	0.4%
<i>Speak English "not at all"</i>	0	713	92	805	0.1%
Speak other Indo-European languages:	840	5,501	1,827	8,168	1.0%
<i>Speak English "very well"</i>	774	3,736	1,542	6,052	0.7%
<i>Speak English "well"</i>	0	912	205	1,117	0.1%
<i>Speak English "not well"</i>	66	853	80	999	0.1%
<i>Speak English "not at all"</i>	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages:	1,145	6,081	514	7,740	0.9%
<i>Speak English "very well"</i>	390	2,467	335	3,192	0.4%
<i>Speak English "well"</i>	755	2,937	139	3,831	0.5%
<i>Speak English "not well"</i>	0	677	26	703	0.1%
<i>Speak English "not at all"</i>	0	0	14	14	0.0%
Speak other languages:	2,957	10,597	2,446	16,000	1.9%
<i>Speak English "very well"</i>	2,331	7,840	1,841	12,012	1.5%
<i>Speak English "well"</i>	626	1,952	329	2,907	0.4%
<i>Speak English "not well"</i>	0	480	257	737	0.1%
<i>Speak English "not at all"</i>	0	325	19	344	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

The South Dakota DLR holds one of the USDOL Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grants. These funds provide an opportunity for the state to develop and implement a plan for improving effective and meaningful participation of youth with disabilities in the workforce.

According to 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau, the percent of South Dakota's population with a disability is 12.6%. For the age group 18-64 years, it is 11.0%. The age group with the highest rate of disability is 65 years and older at 32.5%, which correlates with disabilities often occurring as people age, including hearing, vision and self-care disabilities.

South Dakota Residents with Disabilities (Population 18 to 64 years)		
	Number of Residents	Percent
Total	55,489	11.0%
With a hearing difficulty	14,925	3.0%
With a vision difficulty	10,768	2.1%
With a cognitive difficulty	26,173	5.2%
With an ambulatory difficulty	21,201	4.2%
With a self-care difficulty	8,429	1.7%
With an independent living difficulty	15,989	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

The rate of disabilities by race is highest for the white race at 13.0% followed by the Black or African American (8.4%) and Native American and Alaskan Natives (11.9%) races. The percentage of men with disabilities, 13.0% is slightly higher than for women at 12.3%.

For the core of the labor force (ages 18 to 64 years), the highest percent of disabilities is for those with a cognitive disability, defined by the ACS as ‘existing when a person has a condition lasting six months or more that results in difficulty learning, remembering, or concentrating. Individuals with such limitations are often defined as having mild traumatic brain injury (TBI). Persons with mild TBI often retain the ability to work competitively. Such individuals, however, typically earn less when employed year-round full-time, than do persons without disability and have lower levels of employment. The second highest is for an ambulator disability, which is having difficulty walking or climbing stairs.

Veterans

South Dakota’s estimated population for the civilian population 18 years and over is 666,800 according to the 2019 American Community Survey. The number of veterans is estimated to be 57,000 or 8.6%. The largest veteran population is from the Vietnam era which makes up 36.7% of the veteran population in South Dakota. The civilian population for the age demographic 18-64 years is 513,000 of those 27,300 (5.3%) are veterans and of those 82.5% participate in the labor force. Only 6.6% of veterans in South Dakota have income in the past twelve months that is below the poverty level which is much lower than the non-veteran estimate of 11.4%.

Poverty

The number of people living below the poverty level in South Dakota for the population in which poverty status was measured is 101,900 or 11.9%. This is according to the 2019 American Survey. The race with the highest percentage of their population living below the poverty level is American Indian and Alaska Native at 46.8% and Black or African Americans at 19.9%. Females in South Dakota are slightly more likely to be living below the poverty level with 13.1% versus 10.8% of the male population. Children under the age of 5 are the most likely age demographic to be living below the poverty level. Below is a table of poverty status by age demographic.

Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined			
	Population	Population Below Poverty Level	Percent of Pop Below Poverty Level
Total	854,648	101,946	11.9%
Under 5 years	57,292	9,887	17.3%
5 to 17 years	152,486	21,538	14.1%
18 to 64 years	497,445	59,134	11.9%
65 years and over	147,425	11,387	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey

Labor Force Participation

Current Population Survey (CPS) figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show South Dakota’s labor force participation rate was 68.9% in 2020. In other words, nearly 70% of all (non-institutionalized) residents age 16 years and older were in the labor force, either working or looking for work. This compares to a 2020 national average of 61.7%. Historically, South Dakota consistently has higher rates of labor force participation compared to the nation.

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
South Dakota	69.7%	68.9%	69.4%	68.8%	69.5%	68.9%
United States	62.7%	62.8%	62.9%	62.9%	63.1%	61.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

South Dakota’s participation rate of 68.9% was the fourth-highest rate of all states and the District of Columbia. Nebraska had the highest rate at 70.1%, followed by the District of Columbia at 69.5% and Minnesota at 69.2%.

There can be several reasons why South Dakota civilians are not in the labor force a few of which include specific barriers to employment such as discouragement and poor job prospects as detailed in the following table.

South Dakota Civilians Not in the Labor Force by Age and Sex						
	Total	Age			Sex	
		16 to 24	25 to 54	55 years	Men	Women
Total not in the labor force	211,200	35,200	42,100	134,000	89,700	121,600
Do not want a job now	195,700	29,900	36,000	129,800	81,300	114,500
Want a job	15,500	5,300	6,100	4,100	8,400	7,100
Did not search for work in previous year	11,900	4,000	4,100	3,700	6,100	5,800
Searched for work in previous year	3,600	1,300	1,900	400	2,200	1,300
Not available to work now	1,000	500	400	100	600	400
Available to work now	2,600	800	1,600	200	1,700	900
Reason not currently looking:						
Discouragement over job prospects	700	300	400	100	500	300
Reasons other than discouragement	1,900	500	1,200	100	1,200	700
Note: Subject to high rates of variability; January 2020 - December 2020 reference period.						
Source: Special tabulations of unpublished Current Population Survey (CPS), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.						

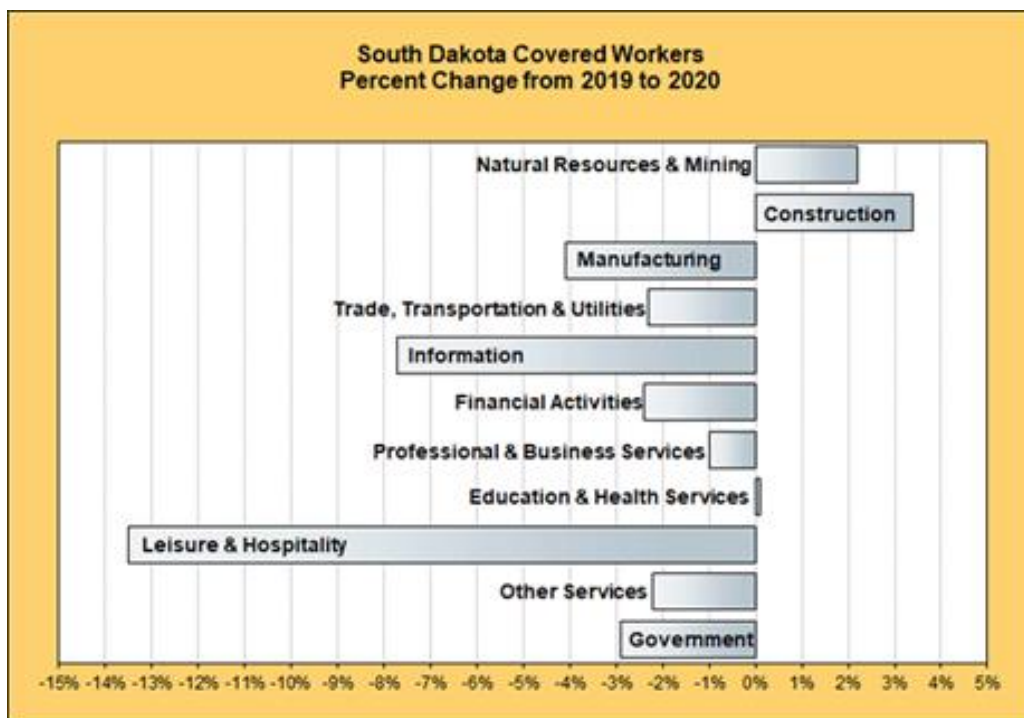
Since 1990 South Dakota's annual average labor force has increased from 349,300 to 463,300 in 2020 which is a 32.6% increase. The number of employed increased by 105,100 (31.2%) to 441,700 over that same time period and looks to be continuing the trend into 2022. Unemployment has also increased slightly during that time but continues to remain relatively stable.

South Dakota Labor Force						
	Change			% Change		
	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020
Labor Force	59,197	35,122	19,638	17%	9%	4%
Employed	61,501	23,691	19,930	18%	6%	5%
Unemployed	-2,304	11,431	-292	-18%	110%	-1%
Source: South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, Labor Market Information Center						

Unemployment rates by educational attainment level indicate the highest unemployment rates in South Dakota correlate with residents who have an educational attainment level of 'high school graduates, no college' (4.0%) and 'less than a high school diploma' (8.8%). In contrast, the lowest unemployment rates are for those residents which have an educational attainment level of 'Bachelor's degree and higher' (2.9%). Higher levels of educational attainment also correlate with higher earnings levels.

South Dakota Employment Status of the Civilian Population							
25 Years and Over by Educational Attainment							
		Civilian Labor Force		Employment		Unemployment	
	Population*	Total	Rate	Total	Rate	Total	Rate
Less than a High school diploma	30,400	14,500	47.9%	13,200	43.6%	1,300	8.8%
High school graduates, no college 1	169,900	109,100	64.2%	104,700	61.6%	4,400	4.0%
Some college or associate degree	192,600	136,900	71.1%	131,900	68.5%	5,000	3.7%
Bachelor's degree and higher 2	186,100	142,400	76.5%	138,200	74.2%	4,200	2.9%
1 Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent							
2 Includes person with bachelor's, master's, professional and doctoral degrees							
*Non-institutionalized population.							
Note: Subject to high rates of variability; December 2020- December 2020 reference period.							
Source: Special tabulations of unpublished Current Population Survey (CPS), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.							

Employment and pay data from the **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)** program includes all workers covered by the RA program in the state (meaning coverage by unemployment insurance). The number of employees covered by unemployment insurance in 2020 was 417,110 workers, equaling 96.0% of South Dakota's wage and salaried workers.



The 2020 worker level of 417,110 represents a decrease of 3.0% from 2019. As the bar graph at the right illustrates, just three supersectors showed worker gains (one increasing just 0.1%) during the year.

Based on this data source, South Dakota had 426,917 workers in 2018. This represents an increase of 1% from 2017. The bar graph indicates eight industries showed increases while three industries decreased during 2018. Covered workers are counted at their place of work. A person who works for more than one covered employer is counted at each job.

Construction

Construction led the pack among the three supersectors showing growth during 2020 with an increase of 802 workers (3.4%). At the sector level, Construction had more establishments than any other in 2020. The number of establishments increased by 54, bringing the total to 4,202 establishments in 2020. The Construction employment growth was spread throughout all three of its subsectors listed below.

- Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction
- Construction of Buildings
- Specialty Trade Contractors

The Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction subsector gained 555 workers (13.9%) in 2020. Utility System Construction was accountable for about two-thirds of this growth. Many water, sewer, power and communication systems needed replacing due to age and damage.

Infrastructure remains at the forefront of many construction projects, and the trend is expected to continue. Many of these projects require assistance from Specialty Trade Contractors, as they have the necessary skill sets for parts of the system development, such as concrete work and electrical wiring.

The Construction of Buildings subsector increased by 97 workers (1.7%) in 2020 to bring the subsector's total to 5,889 workers.

Specialty Trade Contractors added 150 workers (1.1%). While sheltering at home during the pandemic, many homeowners showed heightened interest in having house and yard improvement projects completed. Projects ranged from home offices and kitchen remodeling to decks and fences. Building and specialty trade contractors alike commonly report having projects lined up for months out. These sectors also continue to benefit from a booming housing market.

Natural Resources and Mining

Most of the growth in the Natural Resources and Mining supersector during 2020 was in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting sector, which added 152 workers (2.2%). Soil preparation and planting firms added workers for help with crop planting, cultivation, spraying and dusting. Workers were also hired, some in new establishments, for animal production activities such as beef cattle ranching and farming. Beef cattle farming can be a very profitable business, but raising dairy cattle for herd replacement, and breeding and raising beef cattle for eventual consumption are labor-intensive operations.

Education and Health Services

Although it was the third and final supersector to show growth during 2020, employment growth in Education and Health Services was nearly negligible, at 78 workers (0.1%). Slowing growth in Healthcare and Social Services (336 or 0.5%) offset a decline (258 workers, 7.0%) in Educational Services.

The private Educational Services sector saw a loss in employment during 2020, decreasing by 258 workers (7.0%) to a level of 3,450. Colleges and Universities lost the most employment, with Technical and Trade Schools and Other Schools and Instruction also losing employment. The other four industry groups had slight employment gains in 2020. Most colleges sent students home at the beginning of the pandemic, and instruction was done online. Remaining staff like

Supersector, Sector and Subsector	Number of Establishments	Number of Workers	Annual Pay
Manufacturing	1,118	44,442	\$49,320
Food Manufacturing	137	10,280	\$47,663
Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	23	212	\$22,684
Textile Mills	*	*	*
Textile Product Mills	23	527	\$39,907
Apparel Manufacturing	3	55	\$34,626
Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	3	12	\$12,917
Wood Product Manufacturing	59	2,091	\$47,339
Paper Manufacturing	10	692	\$53,558
Printing and Related Support Activities	96	1,320	\$44,348
Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	*	*	*
Chemical Manufacturing	39	1,103	\$62,086
Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	53	1,587	\$47,986
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	83	1,676	\$59,307
Primary Metal Manufacturing	9	598	\$56,638
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	184	3,934	\$46,144
Machinery Manufacturing	124	6,773	\$51,765
Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	38	2,065	\$42,623
Electrical Equipment and Appliance Manufacturing	13	452	\$44,781
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	51	3,593	\$51,958
Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing	72	2,495	\$38,926
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	95	4,969	\$55,717
Notes:			
*Data was suppressed to prevent disclosure of confidential information.			
Data subject to revision.			
Source: Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.			

food service and facility workers were not needed to the extent they had been, and their hours were greatly reduced or they were temporarily laid off.

The Educational Services sector is widely considered counter-cyclical. Typically, when the economy is doing well and unemployment is at a very low rate, more working adults decide to go to work. More career and job prospects available for working adults, in turn, leads to lower enrollment, decreased profit and a lower need for teachers/instructors at schools.

The Health Care and Social Assistance sector saw both employment and wages rise in 2020. Compared to other sectors, this sector has the highest employment and largest amount of total wages paid out in South Dakota. The number of workers in 2020 increased by 336 (0.5%) to 65,541. Average annual wages increased \$4,664 (8.7%) to \$58,421.

Establishments in Ambulatory Health Care Services lost 88 workers (0.5%) in 2020 for an employment level of 17,902. The number of Hospital workers in 2020 increased by 4.1% to 26,809. This subsector's average annual wage increased \$5,842 (9.9%) to \$64,978.

The Nursing and Residential Care Facilities subsector saw employment decline 2.8% to 12,829 workers. The average annual wage increased 9.2% to \$31,674 per worker.

Establishments in the Social Assistance subsector provide a wide variety of social assistance services directly to their clients. Vocational rehabilitation services belong to this subsector. Business activities include providing job counseling, job training and employment for persons with disabilities. Some of the 266 loss (3.2%) of workers in this subsector during 2020 can be attributed to child day care services, as many daycare services were limited due to COVID-19. Individual and family services and services for the elderly and disabled also had some worker loss.

Occupational Demand by Educational Level

The table below shows the projected demand for workers in South Dakota through 2028. The occupational projections discussed earlier are grouped by educational category (based on the level of education recommended in South Dakota for each specific occupation). This table indicates a lack of education should not be an issue for South Dakota. For example, the projections show more than 29% of the demand for workers in the state through 2028 will be in

occupations that require education beyond high school.

The table above shows 73.3% of South Dakota's labor force participants have some college or an associate degree. Meanwhile, 13.7% of the future demand for workers require a bachelor's degree or higher. In South Dakota 80.2% of the labor force has a bachelor's degree or higher.

South Dakota Employment Projections 2018-2028 By Level of Education Recommended								
South Dakota Educational Category	Number of Workers in 2018	2018 Workers in Category as a Percent of Total Workers	Number of Workers in 2028	2018 Workers in Category as a Percent of Total Workers	Numeric Change 2018-2028	Percent Change 2018-2028	Total Annual Openings	Total Openings in Category as a Percent of Total Workers
Total, all occupations	491,588	100.0%	526,251	100.0%	34,663	7.1%	62,664	100.0%
Less than high school	117,129	23.8%	125,837	23.9%	8,708	7.4%	20,144	32.1%
High school diploma or equivalent	195,321	39.7%	204,371	38.8%	9,050	4.6%	24,126	38.5%
Sum of high school or less	312,450	63.6%	330,208	62.7%	17,758	5.7%	44,270	70.6%
Some postsecondary education	65,221	13.3%	70,796	13.5%	5,575	8.5%	7,615	12.2%
Associate degree	18,069	3.7%	19,975	3.8%	1,906	10.5%	1,817	2.9%
Bachelor's degree	79,188	16.1%	86,792	16.5%	7,604	9.6%	7,609	12.1%
Master's degree	6,891	1.4%	7,777	1.5%	886	12.9%	673	1.1%
Doctoral or professional degree	9,769	2.0%	10,703	2.0%	934	9.6%	636	1.0%
Sum of bachelor's degree or higher	95,848	19.5%	105,272	20.0%	9,424	9.8%	8,918	14.2%
Sum of education beyond high school	179,138	36.4%	196,043	37.3%	16,905	9.4%	18,350	29.3%
Note: Total Annual Openings for categories do not add to Total, all occupations due to rounding.								
Source: Labor Market Information Center, SD Department of Labor and Regulation, Nov. 2021								

2. *Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis.*

An analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of

- (A) The State's Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.*
- (B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.*
- (C) State Workforce Development Capacity. Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.*

Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

The One-Stop System in South Dakota is comprised of a partnership amongst the Workforce Development Council (WDC) and DLR representing all programs, entities, and group members of the One-Stop System entered into a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between Local Board and One-Stop Partners**. The agreement outlines the vision, system structure, operating budget, confidentiality, accessibility, non-discrimination and equal opportunity, indemnification, dispute resolution, modification process, and effective period. The MOU can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

The South Dakota Unified State Plan includes the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation. Education and training activities offered by South Dakota workforce development partners include:

- **WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth** programs offer On-the-Job Training (OJT), Occupational Skills Training (OST) with an approved provider on the **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)** in a program of study that can be completed in two years, Registered Apprenticeship programs with U.S. DOL, Secondary Education through WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy or through the K-12 public school system. These programs also offer Work Experience, mock interviews, leadership development opportunities, job shadows, *Bring Your 'A' Game* soft skills curriculum, and **National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC)**.
- **WIOA Title II AEL** programs in South Dakota offer classes including workforce preparation, integrated education and training, high school equivalency test preparation, English Language acquisition, and civics education.
- **WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser** offers basic career services specifically to include financial literacy courses, Job Search Workshops, WorkKeys® Curriculum Assessment, resume assistance, on-line Alison courses, and Teknimedia computer courses.
- **WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation** offers tuition assistance for post-secondary education, on-the-job training, job coaching, employment follow along, work readiness training, work-based learning experiences, independent living skills training, pre-employment transition services, disability-related skills training, instruction in self advocacy and benefits counseling. Title IV is administered by DHS.
- **Box Elder Job Corps** located in Nemo, South Dakota offers secondary education, English Language Learning Programs, OJTs, and advanced career training.
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** offers individualized case management paired with workforce services to coach customers in overcoming barriers, obtaining education and training, and securing sustainable employment. TANF is administered by the South Dakota Department of Social Services who partners with DLR to offer workforce services.
- The **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** offers Work Experience opportunities at a community work site. They also offer specialized skills training. The program is offered through DLR, Experience Works, Inc. and the National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA).
- **Reemployment Services (RES)** Provides case management, assessment, and development of individualized employment plan to dislocated workers receiving RA benefits.
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)** offers OST or OJT coupled with intensive case management services to those who have lost their job as a result of foreign trade. When a layoff occurs, a petition is submitted on behalf of impacted employees. Once a petition has been approved, DLR connects with the employer to schedule informational meetings. More information available in Section [VI.a\)2](#) of this State Plan.

- **Rapid Response** When DLR is informed of a layoff, Job Service Office staff reach out to the business within two business days to offer DLR's services. More information available in Section [VI.a\)2](#) of this State Plan.
- The **Career and Technical Education (CTE)** program in South Dakota provides training opportunities for both secondary and post-secondary students in South Dakota through DOE.
- The **Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)** provides individualized career and training guidance to eligible individuals with a significant barrier to employment.
- While specific services vary, many of the **Native American Programs** in South Dakota offer Work Experience and post-secondary opportunities to their participants.
- The **National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)** offers occupational skills training and OJT opportunities, and work experiences.

Partnerships continue to be a strength of workforce programs in South Dakota. Tight budgets, a conservative approach, and a small population spread across a large rural landscape combine to offer a natural opportunity for collaboration among workforce partners. Limited budgets have improved creativity in training DLR staff and workforce professionals in South Dakota. Many trainings are offered jointly or made available to the various partner agencies. These joint trainings allow staff across the state to build relationships and hear the same message. The diversity of South Dakota's population is continuously changing. As a result, training must be offered to DLR staff to appropriately understand and serve these individuals.

Strengths

South Dakota understands the importance of **communication between workforce partners** to reduce the stress and confusion participants may face when seeking assistance from the One-Stop system. At the state and administrative level, a Core Program Alignment Consortium (CPAC)^{IV} meets on a regular basis to identify needs, opportunities for collaboration, and areas for improvement. To improve the customer's experience, workforce agencies also work together by holding Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings. These meetings align goals and services to assist an individual in their educational and career pathway. The IRT method also improves opportunities for blending and braiding of resources, while preventing a duplication of services. [III.a\)2.\(C\)](#)

Locally, workforce partner meetings are taking place on a quarterly basis, if not more often. Local meetings look different in each community but may consist of One-Stop partners, South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC), community partners, and business leaders. These meetings are designed to create more awareness of services and initiatives, identify workforce challenges and solutions, streamline efforts, and foster collaboration. A third of the DLR One-Stop Centers, or job service offices, have all six core programs co-located in one facility. Co-location does improve service delivery but working relationships among staff have proven to be the key to coordinated service delivery.

Another small state benefit is evident in the **location of WIOA partner programs within DLR**, including: Title I, Title II, Title III, RES, TAA, Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs), JVSG, and SCSEP. The RA Division (previously Unemployment Insurance), Labor Market Information Center (LMIC), and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program are also under DLR. DLR provides the work component of TANF and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) to individuals deemed eligible and referred from the Department of Social Services (DSS) This structure allows for improved collaboration and co-enrollment among partner programs.

Challenges

While partnerships and collaboration are strong, it is not always coordinated toward a common goal in unison. Staff's time is stretched thin making alignment of efforts difficult to prioritize. Additionally, the six WIOA core programs operate on three different **management information systems**. Two of these systems have been established in the last five years. Technology has a huge impact on a budget in a small state like South Dakota. Therefore, it is not feasible to abandon individual systems and develop one. For this reason, sharing of information is challenging and impacts reporting, performance, and case management.

There are many **rural areas** in South Dakota without Internet access or proximity to DLR One-Stop Career Centers. Despite increasing virtual services, there are many locations in South Dakota lacking network access. In addition, many of our priority populations are those who generally lack the hardware to connect virtually or the digital literacy skills to succeed in a virtual environment. I

In addition, there is a lack of service providers and employment opportunities in rural areas in South Dakota. While South Dakota has a very low unemployment rate, many rural communities have a high unemployment rate with a disengaged workforce.

Capacity

South Dakota has the momentum and key stakeholders ready to assist in the workforce development marathon, but the undertaking will not be without setbacks. In a state where collaboration is second nature, South Dakota is poised to improve upon and expand services provided by One-Stop partners as deemed necessary by job seekers and employers.

Workforce development has been an area of focus at the local and state level. Due to the low unemployment, lack of workforce, and skills gap, businesses growth is limited. As a result, an increasing number of **businesses** are building their own workforce development efforts, such as Registered Apprenticeships, so the skills and knowledge of the individual can better match their needs.

The South Dakota workforce program **network** is strong and increases opportunities for citizens. Partnerships with economic development organizations and business association, such as the South Dakota Retailers Association or the State Chamber of Commerce, have allowed DLR to increase awareness of workforce services available to businesses and individuals. Other WIOA partnerships including those with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), Board of Regents, Board of Technical Education, DOC, the South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS), Jobs for America's Graduates, and Job Corps increase awareness of DLR and DHS programs and identify key points of program entry. While many regions are faced with an order of selection for Title IV services, this is not the situation currently in South Dakota.

South Dakota has worked hard to implement the vision of WIOA, focused on enrolling customers in as many workforce programs they are eligible for and can benefit from. However, the administrative burden of WIOA has increased, which has increased costs to operate SDWORKS, staff time to gather data, meet reporting requirements, evaluate programs, and complete necessary paperwork. Due to the increased need for staff to be cross trained and aware of several programs, standard policies and procedures have been established. While this is a continual and time-intensive process, it is essential and has been a successful method to empower staff throughout the state. South Dakota continues to identify areas for improvement where programs efforts can be streamlined to ease this burden on the small staff numbers.

b) State Strategic Vision and Goals

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

- (1) *Vision*
- (2) *Goals*
- (3) *Performance Goals. Using the table provided in [Appendix 1](#), include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)*
- (4) *Assessment. Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.*

Strategy

A thorough economic assessment is provided in the Economic Analysis section of this state plan. Please refer to section II.(a)(1)(A) for a review. This economic analysis provided a foundation for the vision, goals, and priorities identified below. An overview of the workforce development activities in the state is provided in section II(a)(2)(A) of this plan.

The **vision** of the State of South Dakota is to collaborate amongst Government, education, business, and community to develop a skilled workforce which will allow employers in South Dakota to expand business when the opportunity arises.

Goal 1: Prepare residents of South Dakota to make informed decisions and support them at any point during their career pathway. This includes youth, individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA Section 3(24), and other populations such as Veterans, unemployment workers, and individuals lacking a high school equivalency. Areas of Priority as identified by the Workforce Development Council:

- Engage youth in the workforce and ensure their awareness of the variety of educational and workforce options.
- Educate parents about the variety of educational and workforce options for their children.
- Build a curriculum to assist schools prepare youth for the workforce.

Goal 2: Partner with businesses to discover opportunities and identify solutions to address workforce needs. Areas of Priority as identified by the Workforce Development Council:

- Build relationships with business and industry organizations.
- Engage businesses to assist in educating youth and parents about workforce opportunities in South Dakota.

Goal 3: Engage a system of continuous improvement to ensure the alignment of workforce services. Areas of Priority as identified by the Workforce Development Council:

- As a means to continuous improvement and alignment of workforce services, ensure coordination and collaboration with partner agencies and community partners.

Performance Goals

WIOA Core Program performance goals are included in Appendix 1 of this plan. South Dakota has implemented the following internal performance metrics.

Performance Indicators	Programs	Actual PY 2019	Actual PY 2020	Estimated PY 2021	Estimated PY 2022
Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors In South Dakota	Registered Apprenticeship Grants	140	143	147	151
Individuals Served by Job Service Offices	Title III – Wagner-Peyser	7299	3392	5800	7300
Individuals Who Sought Adult Education & Literacy Services	Title II – Adult Education and Literacy	924	958	853	823
Adult Education & Literacy Participants	Title II – Adult Education and Literacy	1402	1365	1400	1455
Individuals referred to ReEmployment Services	Title III – Wagner-Peyser, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Grant	2051	765	1610	1717
Public K-12 Students provided Work-Based Learning Opportunities	Bring Your A Game, Week of Work, Career Launch	506	4423	6000	7560
Business Engagement in Week of Work & Career Launch	Week of Work, Career Launch	0	108	130	150
Individuals self-serving through SDWORKS	Title III – Wagner-Peyser	15837	19673	18030	17167
Workforce preparation services for non-program participants	Family Focus	211	346	402	481
Recruitment of out-of-state workforce					
New individuals showing interest in Dakota Roots	Dakota Roots	520	755	847	925
Dakota Roots Participants	Dakota Roots	780	903	970	1100

<i>Dakota Roots Participants Entered Employment</i>	Dakota Roots	115		101		150		185
Job Placement of Workforce Program Participants	Title III – Wagner-Peyser	70.4%		63.1%		67.7%		70.1%
Job Placement of Workforce Program Participants with Significant Barriers to Employment	Title III – Wagner-Peyser	67.30%		58.20%		60.10%		62.30%
Workforce Training Opportunities for Workforce Program Participants	Senior Community Service Employment Program, Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, National Dislocated Worker, Youth and TAA	397		381		410		465
Number of Job Orders Listed	Title III – Wagner-Peyser	20079		22413		23747		24974

Assessment

DLR has implemented quarterly performance summaries for each job service office that is shared with DLR staff. These quarterly reports include the performance measures, caseloads, and expenditures of each program by FTE. New in Program Year 2021, DLR plans to implement a team of DLR staff throughout the state who will review active program files and data validation verification items every quarter. This process serves as an intensive training method, but also allows for timely feedback to case managers. This process offers a method to identify training needs, promising practices, and areas in need of improvement at both the state and local level.

While files from each office will be reviewed each quarter, every three years, each office will receive a formal review letter identifying finding, areas of concern, and promising practices. Every four years certification as an One Stop Center will be sought by the Workforce Development Council. This certification includes a review of One Stop Center responsibilities, Equal Opportunity, Americans with Disability Act, program review, and data validation.

DLR entered into an agreement with the Government Research Bureau (GRB) at the University of South Dakota to evaluate to evaluate the effectiveness of utilizing WIOA Title I services with RESEA individuals. Based on the current selection of RESEA services, GRB is unable to establish definitive results. DLR and GRB are moving towards the next phase of the evaluation which may include a random assignment process. DLR will ensure providing services through random assignment does not inhibit an individual's ability to receive services that can often be life changing. DLR and GRB continue to work together to determine the best way to move forward that is beneficial to both the individuals utilizing SDDL services and the program evaluation.

South Dakota will continue to use information available from SDWORKS and LMIC, as well as information available from the Secretary of State, on active South Dakota businesses to measure the number of businesses serviced and opportunities for new business engagement.

Customer satisfaction surveys will continue to be requested by both job seekers and businesses. The results are shared with job service office managers, Labor Program Specialists, and the One-Stop Operator, and analyzed by office and by category to identify strengths and weaknesses. As gaps are identified in the above assessments, partners will review and determine how to best proceed. This process improves services and programs to better meet the needs of job seekers and businesses.

Activities and goals identified in the Unified Workforce Plan will be reviewed during CPAC [v](#) meetings to ensure progress.

c) State Strategy

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

- (1) Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). “Career pathway” is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. “In-demand industry sector or occupation” is defined at WIOA section 3(23).
- (2) Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2).

Implementation

The Labor Market Information Center identified criteria for Hot Careers in 2020. To be considered a “Hot Career,” an occupation met the following criteria:

- be projected to show employment growth to 2028.
- have projected annual openings (a measure of demand for workers) greater than the average across all occupations (85) for 2018-2028.
- have an average/mean wage greater than the median wage across all occupations in 2019 (\$34,754).

South Dakota is using the U.S. DOL State Apprenticeship Expansion grant to implement **Registered Apprenticeship Pathway Programs**. These programs will give South Dakota high school students the opportunity to concurrently earn high school credit, Registered Apprenticeship hours, and post-secondary. Priority for funding will be offered to programs with occupations in high demand in South Dakota. DLR used July 1, 2019 funding to increase programs, develop a pathway program for high school students, and offset costs for existing Registered Apprenticeship programs.

In partnership with the Department of Education, state technical colleges, and WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers, DLR plans to establish a contractual agreement for the development of two **bridge programs**: truck driving and healthcare. The goal is utilize the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief funding to bridge the skills gap many untapped labor pools, such as English Language Learners, public assistance recipients, and those who are or have been involved in the justice system, have to successfully compete post-secondary training in these high demand industries.

Through a partnership with the Department of Corrections, DLR will work with employers to build short-term training programs for inmates prior to their work release. This model will allow DLR to target in-demand occupations, improve the skill set of an untapped labor pool with high unemployment rates, and offer employer’s a workforce with a meaningful skill set.

Funding from a U.S. DOL **National Dislocated Worker Grant** (NDWG) and the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief, allowed DLR to expand partnerships with the technical colleges to offer tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers in the fall and spring of 2020. The Board of Technical Education (BoTE) approved 24 UpSkill programs, approximately 18 credits each, for the fall 2020 semester based on high demand predictions according to data provided by the DLR Labor Market Information Center. All programs were embedded within existing academic programs, allowing a pathway for students to continue their studies to receive an Associates of Applied Science. Programs were offered in the areas of agriculture, finance, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing, and marketing. While many certificates have been earned through UpSkill, the collaborative partnership established between the technical colleges and DLR will improve services for years to come.

UpSkill was offered again in fall of 2021, but with expanded eligibility to offer this to participants of other workforce program as well. Future expansion ideas include incorporating industry recognized credentials and developing a similar partnership with tribal colleges. While conversations have started, these partnerships are still in development. For this reason, DLR will seek an extension to the NDWG.

While many students preparing for their high school equivalency with AEL programs are also enrolled in WIOA Title I programs, enrollment could improve. DLR will coordinate efforts to pilot a project to offer a **part-time Work Experience for those attending AEL between the ages of 16 and 24** for secondary preparation through the WIOA Title I program concurrently with their studies. If successful, a similar model with English Language Learners may be established. In

addition to providing career exploration and hands on work experience for these individuals, WIOA Title I may offer financial supports such as daycare or transportation to improve educational outcomes. DLR will strive to increase co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and Title II for participants ages 16 through 24 from 14% of Title II participants per program year to 20% by 2024. In Program Year 2020, DLR is committed to serving at least 20 of these co-enrolled participants with a Work Experience or Job Shadow to compliment the high school equivalency classroom schedule. As the co-enrollment numbers increase, DLR will annually reevaluate this goal for each program year.

To increase awareness, DLR, DOE, and AEL providers will offer **joint presentations** to educators with labor market resources and toolkits, including the South Dakota Hot Careers. [II.a\)1.\(A\)\(ii\)](#) Additionally, Title I Youth statewide funding in conjunction with funding from DOE, allows for 11 DLR staff to work hand-in-hand with local school districts to increase career exploration opportunities so students can make informed decisions about their education and career pathway. Career Advisors assist by increasing work-based learning opportunities for students and coordinate business speakers, job shadows, internships, industry tours, and provide classroom presentations and one-on-one career guidance. Future plans include developing toolkits for schools and businesses to ease implementation of work-based learning opportunities. The Youth Waivers requested in this plan are essential to allow DLR to further assist eligible in-school youth in need of our services.

South Dakota Governor Noem has identified one week each spring to celebrate the **South Dakota Week of Work** [III.a\)2.\(B\)](#), in partnership with DLR and DOE, to promote work-based learning. The Week of Work promotes job shadows, industry tours, and classroom presentations by businesses for high school and middle school students statewide. DLR and DOE facilitate and host virtual panels during the week for industry representatives in career cluster groupings to answer questions and give advice about career paths and skills needed to find a fulfilling career. Panels are recorded and posted on YouTube for future playback along with submitted videos highlighting specific occupations.

To enhance **business engagement** efforts, South Dakota plans to:

1. Establish a Business Engagement and Services Team (BEST) to specialize in developing consultative relationships with businesses to identify their needs and offer appropriate DLR services or connections to other resources.
2. Offer joint trainings for staff on engaging with businesses.
3. Offer trainings, such as “lunch and learn,” for businesses to learn more about services.
4. Write business testimonials and share success stories.
5. Partner with businesses to host employer events, such as job fairs. Improve engagement in rural areas by using technology and a coordinated effort.
6. Connect with industry associations to build Registered Apprenticeship programs and increase the skill set of an in-demand workforce crossing an industry sector.

To ensure a continuous **customer-centered focus**, South Dakota will:

- Hold annual meetings among partner programs to identify collaborative efforts, best practices, and areas for improvement.
- Write partner testimonials and success stories to share.
- Improve data sharing to benefit enrollment and case management.
- Conduct quarterly partner meetings in local areas, bringing together workforce and community partners to address areas of challenge, such as transportation and daycare, and identify opportunities for collaboration.
- Increase collaboration and coordination of services through Integrated Resource Teams.
- Improve engagement and services to rural areas by using technology and a coordinated effort to increase rural community presence.
- Improve services to minority populations by improving cultural competency of staff.

South Dakota uses three **data management systems** for federal reporting and casework for the six core programs. It is not recommended to attempt development of a single system. Instead, reporting elements of each system involved with Titles I, II, III, and IV will be shared to improve casework, federal and state reporting, and communication between agencies. [III.b\)6.](#)

Federal regulations put restrictions on staff, supervision, and program responsibilities. However, improvements can be made to address ***coordination at field offices***. South Dakota plans to:

- Identify lease agreement dates, space needs, current space pros/cons, etc. and include as regular agenda item at CPAC [IV](#) meetings.
- Share partner meeting best practices to improve communication and staff collaboration.
- Consider office layout, including reception areas and waiting rooms, to determine if responsibilities and costs are fairly distributed and provide the best customer service.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

a) **State Strategy Implementation**

1. **State Board Functions**

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

South Dakota is designated as a single local area state, pursuant to WIOA Sec. 106(d)(1), 106(d)(2); and 20 CFR 679.270. State Executive Order 95-14 established the Workforce Development Council (WDC) as the South Dakota Workforce Investment Board to carry out the role of the local board. DLR provides the administration and delivery of services on behalf of the WDC. A single board and a single delivery entity creates an environment for streamlined coordination between the core partners statewide. Under WIOA, the WDC is an alternate entity as identified in WIOA §101(e).

Leadership and vision for the workforce development system emanates from the members of the WDC appointed by the Governor. The WDC is a driving force behind workforce development since inception on June 19, 1995, under the Governor's Executive Order 95-14. This distinguished group of leaders guides the One-Stop delivery system in South Dakota. The WDC members, representing private sector business, labor and community-based organizations, and state government, bring effective representation for the interests, needs, and priorities of South Dakota. More information about the WDC may be found on the DLR website at sdjobs.org/workforce_services/wdc. The Executive Order designated DLR as the fiscal, administrative, and delivery agent of the Council.

The WDC holds public meetings each quarter for testimonials, presentations, action items, and open discussion. As identified in the WDC by-laws, available at sdjobs.org/workforce_services/wdc/documents/wdcbylaws.pdf, a member of the WDC may not vote on a matter under consideration by the state regarding the provision of services by such member (or by an entity the member represents); or that would provide direct financial benefit to such member or the immediate family of the member; or engage in any other activity determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict of interest.

The focus of the WDC is consistent with the Governor's workforce initiatives and compatible with the vision of the U.S. DOL Employment and Training Administration. The WDC assumes roles consistent with WIOA Section 101(d).

Responsibilities include:

- WIOA State plan vision and goals;
- Final approval of the WIOA Unified State Plan;
- Discussion and input on improvements to the One-Stop system, including partner programs;
- Identification of best practices for employers, especially in recruitment, retention, and training;
- Review of policies and development of strategies for improvement;
- Offer guidance for the development of policies and proposals;
- Re-certification of One-Stop Career Centers; and
- Selection of the One-Stop Operator.

All meeting notifications, agendas, and minutes are sent by e-lert for anyone subscribed and available at boardsandcommissions.sd.gov and the DLR website in accordance to state law. Special accommodations or materials in alternative formats are available on request.

2. **Implementation of State Strategy**

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in II(c) above. This must include a description of—

- (A) *Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy. Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.*

Core Program Activities

Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs provide funding for On-the-Job Training (OJT), Occupational Skills

Training (OST) with a provider on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in a program of study that can be completed in two years, Registered Apprenticeship programs with U.S. DOL, Work Experiences, youth incentives, and Support Services. These programs also offer mock interviews, leadership development opportunities, job shadows, and the National Career Readiness Certificate.

Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs in South Dakota offer classes including workforce preparation, integrated education and training, high school equivalency test preparation, English Language acquisition, and civics education. The Adult Education and Literacy providers offer TABE assessments. One-on-one tutoring is offered on a limited basis due to a lack of capacity.

Title III Wagner-Peyser does not offer financial services to businesses or participants. Services offered to participants through Wagner-Peyser do not have an individual cost. Wagner-Peyser does help to support SDWORKS, the management information system, Teknimedia, WorkKeys Curriculum, online Alison courses, Job Search Assistance Program (JSAP), and financial literacy.

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation offers tuition assistance for post-secondary education, on-the job training, job coaching, employment follow along, work readiness training, independent living skills training, pre-employment transition services, disability-related skills training, benefits counseling, assistive technology, and support services.

Services and Enrollment

South Dakota has embraced WIOA and focused on decreasing silos. Increased access to services by enrollment into multiple workforce programs is outlined below:

- The Title I **Adult** program is available to anyone over the age of 18 and funding is prioritized for those who are Basic Skills Deficient, receiving Public Assistance, or Low Income. Funding is also available to individuals who have a disability, ex-offenders, or lack a secondary education diploma. Currently, individuals enrolled in WIOA Title I are also required to be enrolled in Wagner-Peyser.
- Title I **Youth** participants ages 18 and older are to be enrolled in the Title I Adult program.
- **Dislocated Workers** are also co-enrolled with Wagner-Peyser and Title I Adult program.
- Participants of **Re-Employment Services** (RES) or **Trade Adjustment Assistance** (TAA) must also be enrolled in the Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I Adult, Youth, and/or Dislocated Worker programs as appropriate.
- Individuals enrolled in WIOA Title II and Title IV are also encouraged to be enrolled in Title I.
- Registered apprentices taking part in the State **Apprenticeship** Expansion grant's third round of funding will be enrolled in Wagner-Peyser and the Title I Adult program (if 18 years or older).
- **TANF** applicants are enrolled in Title III at the time of TANF intake. TANF participants are enrolled in Title I [III.2. B](#)
- DLR has a partnership with **Job Corps** to enroll students in Title III and Title I to provide classes and financial and training services. [III.a\)2.\(B\)](#)
- Able-bodied adults without dependents receiving **SNAP E&T** services are also enrolled in Wagner-Peyser. When applicable these individuals are also enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.
- **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** participants are enrolled in Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I.
- **Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)** participants are encouraged to be enrolled in other programs. However, JVSG documentation is based on self-attestation whereas several other programs require verifiable documentation. When an individual is not willing to provide documentation required by a program, they are not enrolled in additional programs.

As a way to improve the customer's experience, **workforce agencies work together** for a customer's benefit by holding Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings. These meetings align goals and services to avoid overwhelming a participant who already has stressors in their life. This method also improves opportunities for blending and braiding of resources, while preventing a duplication of services. [III.a\)2.\(C\)](#)

Examples of further opportunities include:

- Enrolling SCSEP participants into WIOA Title I expands opportunities by allowing Work Experience at for-profit

organizations and businesses, rather than being limited to non-profit organizations. Title I programming offers participants a wage aligned with the occupational wage (SCSEP only offers minimum wage). A Community Service Agreement under SCSEP can be a Work Experience service under Title I. While SCSEP can offer certain Support Services, WIOA Title I offers a broader variety of Support Services.

- English language learners and individuals without a high school diploma receiving services through WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy are also eligible for WIOA Title I. Offering a package of wrap around services to these individuals, such as intensive case management, work experiences, and support services, improves the likelihood an individual will complete their education rather than abandoning their educational goals for a survivor job. This coordinated effort across programs improves long-term outcomes for our participants and performance for both programs.
- Enrolling individuals in both WIOA Title I and Title IV offers an individual more opportunities for success by starting a job with a job shadow offered by Title I. Moving into a situational assessment offered by Title IV can transition into a Work Experience paid by Title I, and then an OJT offered by Title I or Title IV. This allows for opportunities to become comfortable with a position and minimizes the risk an employer may have in hiring an individual with a barrier to employment.

(B) Alignment with Activities outside the Plan. Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

Additional Program Alignment

Work-based learning builds awareness of career options, especially those in South Dakota, resulting in informed decisions about career and educational pathways. WIOA Title I Youth statewide funding is being utilized in partnership with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) Career and Technical Education Division to support 11 **Career Launch SD Career Advisors** in local school districts across the state to supplement the career readiness efforts school districts across the state. The Career Launch SD Career Advisor model was created to re-engage students in the workforce and invigorate youth excitement regarding opportunities in their own communities and, in turn, meet the ever-rising demand for a skilled workforce. Career Advisors are DLR staff working with local school districts and business communities to connect students to the workforce and provide them with firsthand knowledge and experience in their fields of interest. The team was formed in the Spring of 2018 and piloted in four communities. Efforts expanded to four additional communities in the following fall semester. In the 2020-2021 school year, career advising services to schools statewide using a regional approach. In the second phase of the program, schools will have the ability to request the assistance of a career advisor. Requests will be granted based on location and staff availability, once agreements are in place. The objective of the expansion is to make the Career Launch SD efforts more sustainable. Expansion will maximize resources, increasing the number of schools and students receiving services through DLR. As staff transition to a regional approach, serving several school districts with one Career Advisor, they will continue to coordinate work-based learning opportunities, business speakers, job shadows, internships, and tours, or provide one-on-one career advising and classroom presentations.

Box Elder Job Corps is the only **Job Corps** campus in South Dakota, located in Nemo approximately 40 miles from Rapid City Job Service. A partnership in South Dakota opens opportunities for Job Corps students (and businesses hosting students) to benefit from DLR services. Job Corps students are bused to Rapid City Job Service to complete Job Search Workshops, financial literacy courses, and meet with DLR staff. Job Corps students can be enrolled into WIOA Title I to receive assistance finding internships and funding for Work Experience and Support Services. Job Corps students preparing to transfer back to their community are connected with the local job service office. The partnership also opens doors for local exposure. Title I Youth Career Advisors assist in providing tours of Job Corps facilities to students in the Rapid City School District. The WDC also held a quarterly meeting on campus in July 2018, hearing from instructors, students, and a business benefiting from the partnership.

As a state leading the nation in brain drain, it is important South Dakota students know of the career opportunities available to in their home state. South Dakota Governor Noem has launched the **South Dakota Week of Work** to promote work-based learning for high school students. DLR, DOE, and the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce will

work with businesses, school districts, and students to introduce 11,000 high school sophomores to career opportunities in their communities through job shadows, industry tours, and other business-classroom connections. Promotion and logistical efforts began in June 2019. South Dakota anticipates this effort to become an annual event as the 2020 pilot kick starts a partnership between educators and businesses.

Prior to the 2022 Week of Work, a database will launch to allow businesses to find teachers looking for classroom connections to area industries and allow teachers and DLR staff to connect students and classrooms to employers in the state. The **Future Workforce Finder** will serve South Dakota students and employers by facilitating more opportunities for exposure to career opportunities in south Dakota.

Through the U.S. DOL State Apprenticeship Expansion Grants, DLR continues to support the broadening of career pathways available to job-seekers. **Registered Apprenticeship** programs result in increased opportunities for upward mobility, increased pay, and career stability. Apprenticeship programs offer employers and intermediaries to adapt at a much faster pace than traditional education and training programs to meet the volatile changes that are occurring as a result of the pandemic. DLR and the Office of Apprenticeship has created a responsive partnership to identify and respond to establish new and expand RAPs. While leveraging WIOA programs to support South Dakotan's with barriers to employment in their pursuit of satisfying careers.

DLR has enhanced our partnership with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to integrate the **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training** into other workforce programs. Individuals DSS determines eligible for these services are referred to DLR. In partnership with DSS, DLR enrolls these high priority individuals into the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I programs as appropriate. Program leadership has been focusing on developing policy and procedural guidance for Job Service Office staff. Recognizing this population is not engaged in the workforce and has a cycle of participation and non-compliance, the WIOA Title I Adult program, in partnership with WIOA Title II Adult Education Literacy providers, Eligible Training Providers, and DSS, is establishing policy that identifies a service delivery model that incorporates intensive case management, support services, work experiences, and tutoring allowing this population to focus on their studies and build their work history to increase employment options and income. Another effort of this partnership is to make meaningful workforce services available remotely to TANF recipients served by DSS case managers. The goal of this partnership is to offer support and services to provide these individuals with the skills and supports they need to move off public assistance and on to independence.

A DLR partnership with the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) offers job search assistance, the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), and high school equivalency prep courses to inmates. Through a review of collaboration, DLR and DOC have established joint office hours to better engage and retain **ex-offenders** in the workforce to reduce recidivism rates. A partnership with the Department of Education, Board-of Technical Education, technical colleges, and DLR, has focused on increasing availability of short-term credentials coupled with related on-the-job opportunities for inmates in South Dakota's prison system, prior to release.

The Black Hill Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) offers the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). BHSSC, in coordination with DLR, conduct joint outreach and identify Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers who may benefit from workforce programs offered through the One Stop Delivery System, including the NFJP.

DLR administers the following programs and aligns efforts with core programs internally:

- **SCSEP** participants are also enrolled in Title III and the Title I Adult program. Considering WIOA Title I individuals who are low income are a priority and individuals 55 years old and older are considered to have a barrier to employment, the SCSEP population are ideal participants. Enrollment in the WIOA Title I program increases opportunity to find employment by opening the doors to private employers.
- Individuals receiving Reemployment Services (RES) are referred to the One-Stop Career Centers by the **Reemployment Assistance (RA) Division** and typically report in the fourth or fifth week of receiving RA benefits. Individuals are enrolled in Title III and Title I and appropriate services are provided. Enrolling these individuals into WIOA Title I increases access to financial services to increase employment opportunities.

- **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)** individuals are enrolled in WIOA Title I and Title III to increase access to Support Services.
- While recent efforts have improved coordination of the efforts provided by **Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP)** staff with other workforce programs, there is room for growth to increase knowledge and understanding of this grant and increase access for veterans and eligible spouses.
- The staff in the DLR One-Stop Career Centers register individuals for the **Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)**. Many of the customers DLR serves can share this benefit with employers to get their foot in the door.
- DLR is working to implement a **Federal Bonding Program** through a federal grant and WIOA Title I Support Service funding. WIOA Title I participants not eligible for funding through the federal grant, can receive a federal bond through Title I Support Services.

(C) *Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals. Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.*

Partner Coordination

Intensive case management through Active Resource Coordination (ARC) and IRTs improve services to customers by decreasing duplication of services and streamlining processes. ARC identifies targeted activities and programs designed to assist customers with multiple challenges to employment by increasing access to services. A participant's assessment results may assist in determining such targeted activities. From this coordination, IRT meetings can seamlessly bring together those members representing the targeted activities and programs identified through the ARC process. This team should also include any natural supports of the participant and most importantly, the participant. The IRT alongside the participant to strategize delivery of services to reach and maintain the participant's employment goal. Membership of an IRT is likely to change as the participant's needs and short-term goals change. Members of an IRT work toward common goals and meetings are held to celebrate the completion of goals and when needs arise.

In compliance with South Dakota WIOA [Agency Partner Meetings](#) Policy 3.7, local workforce partner meetings take place on a quarterly basis, at a minimum. These meetings allow staff to become familiar with a variety of services available to their customers, identify needs in the community, and create awareness of policy or program changes.

To improve knowledge of partner program structure and requirements, and therefore increase coordination, DLR plans to develop a matrix of One-Stop partner programs as a reference guide for staff to become familiar with eligibility and services offered by the various programs.

•

(D) *Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers. Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.*

Services to Employers

The outcomes of the South Dakota Week of Work [III.a\)2.\(B\)](#) efforts and successes will provide a new sense of partnership between business and state workforce development services. In anticipation for this renewed environment, DLR and DHS have shifted focus to improve engagement with businesses and the services provided by both agencies and workforce partners. While both agencies have a history of business assistance and services, engagement needs to increase under WIOA. Further, the number of programs to assist South Dakota business can be confusing to understand, both inside the One-Stop System and for South Dakota employers.

At the end of 2019, DLR held a lean event, called a kaizen, to review the current **business engagement** practices in One-

Stop Career Centers statewide to design a new process with a focus on coordination. The workgroup documented several areas of opportunity and improvement, including:

- Services provided are not captured in SDWORKS, partially because job service office staff do not practice entering business services;
- Services provided to employers not registered in SDWORKS cannot be captured;
- Employers are overwhelmed by government language and variety of workforce services presented to them; and
- General knowledge of the best practices of approaching businesses is in need of improvement.

In preparation for improvement initiatives, five staff from DLR and DHS completed a Business U to gain knowledge on business engagement and training development. The business engagement team will work to mitigate the areas of improvement identified. The following efforts and tangibles will be developed:

- Provide further clarification of definitions and examples of business services for SDWORKS entry and outreach to employers;
- Develop training to emphasize the importance of business service data entry and tailoring messages during outreach;
- Develop a business engagement plan with each job service office to identify goals; and
- Develop and implement a Customer Relationship Module (CRM) in SDWORKS with the ability to identify services to unregistered businesses.

Recognizing a need to build DLR staff's capacity to engage with businesses, DLR is building on training DLR and DHS staff completed with Business U and training offered by U.S. DOL provided by Maher and Maher, to develop a team of Job Service Staff throughout the state to develop a **Business Engagement and Services Team (BEST)**. While still in its infancy, the BEST meets frequently with program staff to learn tips and develop tools to move relationships with businesses from transactional to transformational. South Dakota plans to use a consultant model where relationships with businesses are developed to learn their needs, then identify services available to meet the expressed needs.

(E) Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions. Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv).

Educational Institutions

DLR has a strong relationship with each of the four **technical institutes** in South Dakota and the Board of Technical Education (BoTE). Many of the programs offered at the technical institutes are available to WIOA Title I participants through the ETPL. DLR is also working in collaboration with the technical institutes and DOE to identify industry recognized credentials, create visual career pathways, and improve data sharing.

In partnership with the Department of Education, state technical colleges, and WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers, DLR plans to establish a contractual agreement for the development of two **bridge programs**: truck driving and healthcare. The goal is utilize the Governor's Emergency Education Relief funding to bridge the skills gap many untapped labor pools, such as English Language Learners, public assistance recipients, and formerly justice, have to successfully compete post-secondary training in these high demand industries.

Funding from a U.S. DOL **National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG)** and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief, allowed DLR to expand partnerships with the technical colleges to offer tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers in the fall and spring of 2020. The Board of Technical Education (BoTE) approved 24 UpSkill programs, approximately 18 credits each, for the fall 2020 semester based on high demand predictions according to data provided by the DLR Labor Market Information Center. All programs were embedded within existing academic programs, allowing a pathway for students to continue their studies to receive an Associates of Applied Science. Programs were offered in the areas of agriculture, finance, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing, and marketing.

This was offered again in fall of 2021, but with expanded eligibility to offer this to participants of other workforce

program as well. Future expansion ideas include incorporating industry recognized credentials and developing a similar partnership with tribal colleges. While conversations have started, these partnerships are still in development. For this reason, DLR will seek an extension to the NDWG.

While specific goals are still in development, DLR is working in collaboration with the Department of Education, Board of Technical Education, Board of Regents, and the business community to improve coordination of data, services, and resources to identify training programs needed to meet employer's workforce needs.

Registered Apprenticeship Pathway Programs will improve collaboration between educators, businesses, and workforce development. High school graduates in the pathway program will graduate with high school credit, Registered Apprenticeship hours, post-secondary credit, and on-the-job experience. [VI.b\)2.](#)

South Dakota does not have a community college system.

(F) *PartnerEngagementwithOtherEducationandTrainingProviders. Describehowthe State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.*

Training Providers

DLR has successfully engaged with several training providers and businesses to build Registered Apprenticeship programs through grant awards, outreach, and technical support. This effort will continue at a greater pace with the addition of a second Registered Apprenticeship Labor Program Specialist. DLR is also collaborating with training providers to identify industry recognized credentials.

The Labor Market Information Center (LMIC) within DLR identifies a list of Hot Careers [II.a\)1.\(A\)\(ii\)](#) as high demand-high wage occupations in the state. Efforts are made to promote and circulate this list to benefits educators, students, employers, and job seekers, and help focus workforce development efforts.

In partnership with the Labor Market Information Center, DLR is developing outreach materials highlighting industries in high demand that require training offered by providers on the ETPL. These materials will be distributed to untapped labor pools, including individuals receiving public assistance, Reemployment Assistance, and justice involved individuals, who are likely eligible for financial assistance through the WIOA Title I programs. With the existing workforce shortage, creative engagement with untapped labor pools to increase their skills set is essential.

Citizens in South Dakota have long requested a user-friendly method of identifying Registered Apprenticeship opportunities available. DLR is conducting outreach to Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to seek their approval for inclusion on a **StartTodaySD Apprenticeship Finder**.

In partnership with the Department of Education, DLR is utilizing U.S. DOL grant funding and Governor's Emergency Education Relief funding to foster relationships between state technical colleges, industry associations, and businesses to build **Registered Apprenticeship programs in STEM industries**.

In partnership with DOE, DLR is using grant funding to build materials teachers or DLR Career Advisors can utilize in the classroom of our public schools to increase **student's awareness of Registered Apprenticeships** as a post-secondary option.

Funding from a U.S. DOL **National Dislocated Worker Grant** (NDWG) and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief, allowed DLR to expand partnerships with the technical colleges to offer tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers in the fall and spring of 2020. The Board of Technical Education (BoTE) approved 24 UpSkill programs, approximately 18 credits each, for the fall 2020 semester based on high demand predictions according to data provided by the DLR Labor Market Information Center. All programs were embedded within existing academic programs, allowing a pathway for students to continue their studies to receive an Associates of Applied Science. Programs were offered in the areas of agriculture,

finance, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing, and marketing.

This was offered again in fall of 2021, but with expanded eligibility to offer this to participants of other workforce program as well. Future expansion ideas include incorporating industry recognized credentials and developing a similar partnership with tribal colleges. While conversations have started, these partnerships are still in development. For this reason, DLR will seek an extension to the NDWG.

DLR recently implemented a module in SDWORKS to help streamline the process for providers to apply for the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and submit required data in a secure manner. Continued goals include developing guidance and training for Job Service Office staff and potential providers throughout the state. This will hopefully allow us to expand post-secondary offerings for Title I participants.

(G) Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access. Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

Educational Access

To narrow the gap between workforce needs and availability, the **Build Dakota Scholarship** program was created through a \$50 million investment funded by a \$25 million donation from T. Denny Sanford and a \$25 million from the South Dakota future fund. To extend the initial \$50 million investment, businesses sponsoring a student share the tuition cost with the Build Dakota program. A board identifies qualifying programs through the technical institutes. This determination is based on labor market information provided through the LMIC, similar to the ETPL process. Students entering one of these programs at the technical institutes can apply to be selected for a Build Dakota scholarship. If selected, the student must live in South Dakota and work in the field they earned their degree in for a period of three years following graduation. Job service offices refer participants to the Build Dakota scholarship program and have connected with the technical institutes to refer those who were not selected to the job service office for possible tuition assistance.

In partnership with the Department of Education, state technical colleges, and WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy providers, DLR plans to establish a contractual agreement for the development of two **bridge programs**: truck driving and healthcare. The goal is utilize the Governor's Emergency Education Relief funding to bridge the skills gap many untapped labor pools, such as English Language Learners, public assistance recipients, and formerly justice, have to successfully compete post-secondary training in these high demand industries.

Funding from a U.S. DOL **National Dislocated Worker Grant** (NDWG) and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief, allowed DLR to expand partnerships with the technical colleges to offer tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers in the fall and spring of 2020. The Board of Technical Education (BoTE) approved 24 UpSkill programs, approximately 18 credits each, for the fall 2020 semester based on high demand predictions according to data provided by the DLR Labor Market Information Center. All programs were embedded within existing academic programs, allowing a pathway for students to continue their studies to receive an Associates of Applied Science. Programs were offered in the areas of agriculture, finance, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing, and marketing.

This was offered again in fall of 2021, but with expanded eligibility to offer this to participants of other workforce program as well. Future expansion ideas include incorporating industry recognized credentials and developing a similar partnership with tribal colleges. While conversations have started, these partnerships are still in development. For this reason, DLR will seek an extension to the NDWG.

(H) Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials. Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

Credential Access

South Dakota remains a national leader in creative uses of the U.S. DOL State Apprenticeship Expansion Grants,

continuing to build a relationship with the Office of Apprenticeship State Director and provide technical support to create new programs as quickly as possible. DLR continues to engage with businesses to discuss **Registered Apprenticeship opportunities** for their workforce. [VI.b\)2.](#)

WIOA Title II has local AEFLA providers with two of the state’s four technical colleges. Beyond these obvious partnerships, there exist a few Integrated Education and Training activities which continue to evidence industry-recognized credentials in high-demand occupations; these IET credentials are both stackable and portable. Furthermore, the Title II Program delivers Professional Development to integrate College and Career Readiness [standards] into Adult Education instruction, activities, and services.

WIOA Title IV offers individualized services, including transition services, to **facilitate the transition from school to post-secondary life**, as well as, vocational training itself. Pre-employment transition services further prepare youth with disabilities for post-secondary education.

DLR is expanding supports for participants in post-secondary education programs by establishing a relationship with a provider of virtual tutoring services. Often times this relationship goes beyond tutoring to offer mentoring support as well.

A partnership with the Department of Education, Board-of Technical Education, technical colleges, and DLR, has focused on increasing availability of short-term credentials coupled with related on-the-job opportunities for inmates in South Dakota’s prison system, prior to release.

Funding from a U.S. DOL **National Dislocated Worker Grant** (NDWG) and the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief, allowed DLR to expand partnerships with the technical colleges to offer tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers in the fall and spring of 2020. The Board of Technical Education (BoTE) approved 24 UpSkill programs, approximately 18 credits each, for the fall 2020 semester based on high demand predictions according to data provided by the DLR Labor Market Information Center. All programs were embedded within existing academic programs, allowing a pathway for students to continue their studies to receive an Associates of Applied Science. Programs were offered in the areas of agriculture, finance, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing, and marketing.

This was offered again in fall of 2021, but with expanded eligibility to offer this to participants of other workforce program as well. Future expansion ideas include incorporating industry recognized credentials and developing a similar partnership with tribal colleges. While conversations have started, these partnerships are still in development. For this reason, DLR will seek an extension to the NDWG.

Recognizing we need to engage those who are currently not involved in the workforce and improve their skills, polices have been established to offer intensive case management, support services, work experiences or training, in conjunction with secondary or post-secondary training. The goal is to alleviate barriers participants often face allowing them to focus on their long-term goals in hopes of increasing their skill set to meet needs of employers.

(I) Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies. Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

DLR has a long history of working closely with the Governor’s Office of **Economic Development** (GOED) on a state and community level. A representative from GOED is a member of the state Workforce Development Council. Both agencies have collaborated to develop a unified message to the business community in South Dakota. Training on workforce offerings offered by both agencies has been provided to all staff statewide. Local One-Stop Career Centers work collaboratively with their local and regional economic development entities and local chambers. Job service offices assist in providing labor market information to businesses potentially relocating or looking to expand. Enhancements to SDWORKS has granted public access to real-time labor market information almost instantly.

b) State Operating Systems and Policies

1. The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State’s strategies. This must include a description of–

- (A) *State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (e.g., labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case- management systems, job banks, etc.).*
- (B) *Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.*

Operating System Coordination

Primary operating system efforts are focused on developing a client-centric supply system to engage individuals, connect them to available services and resources, and facilitate their employment goals. SDWORKS (Titles I, III), FACES (Title IV), and LACES (Title II) are the three WIOA data management systems. [III.b\)6.](#)

DLR utilizes **SDWORKS**, a Geographic Solutions, Inc. (GeoSol, Inc.) Virtual One-Stop System, to capture business and client activities and services provided throughout the agency. The system serves as the primary data collection point for reporting Title I and Title III data and performance measures under WIOA, and integrates labor market information directly, to assist seekers, employers, and others in determining in-demand jobs. The demand indicator is based on a methodology that ranks all South Dakota jobs based on future growth and wages. Rankings and information are updated quarterly using demand and wage data. While traditional time-lagged data can be used to identify current and future job demand and the skills associated to those jobs, the data often provides generally broad education and skill requirements and can be slow to highlight new and emerging job categories. SDWORKS has available real-time data obtained from analyzing current job postings, employer engagement, and modelling tools that include forward-looking data. This information helps identify projected future skill gaps. Educational and training institutions can use the data to provide programs for forecasted workforce needs.

System improvements for SDWORKS are ongoing. DLR has launched an **ETPL module** within SDWORKS, which has eliminated duplication of processes and potential human error while streamlining communication and collection of required performance data elements. The improved ability to export performance data for the WIPS report and monitor program performance is more efficient and allows DLR to make stronger recommendations for program approval to the WDC.

DLR has also embarked on a project to integrate the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program registration and tracking application as a module within SDWORKS. This integration will allow the addition of features such as online registration and transactions, greatly improving application processing efficiency, and is a more efficient utilization of staff time. As part of this project, additional data-sharing interfaces with partner programs will be utilized.

To facilitate partnership and coordination of services, DLR is in discussions with our partners at DSS to pool resources and possibly add a module to SDWORKS for SNAP Employment and Training, as well as TANF. This would allow DLR to better track referrals between partners, as well as services provided.

Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation) uses VR FACES as the case management system. This system follows the case service process for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). VR FACES collects required data on VR applicants and clients necessary for required reporting to the US Department of Education/Rehabilitation Services Administration. The VR FACES is designed for tracking Social Security/Ticket to Work activities and consumer satisfaction results. The system is designed to generate quality assurance reports and incorporates annual case file reviews. The VR FACES integrates Social Security benefits and unemployment wage records for each VR participant.

As mentioned, South Dakota core programs use three systems for **data collection**. Each system is able to record and track all activities and services. Data is derived from customer self-service, staff entry, and system interfaces to integrate partner systems and vendor custom applications. Core programs should work together seamlessly. DLR and DHS are currently working to modify SDWORKS, LACES, and VR FACES to communicate through an interface methodology. This interface will share information on participant's involvement with each other's programs and services. This will help the WIOA core programs better communicate and coordinate services. This project will eliminate modifications to legacy systems in terms of process and actions but would change them in capabilities pertaining to data collection and reporting. Once complete, the legacy systems will be tied together without sacrificing staff experience and comfort-levels. DLR and DHS will work to ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing occurs to align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience for all WIOA core programs. [III.b\)6.](#)

All services and data collection elements for all core and partner programs are based on the Participant Individualized Record Layout (PIRL), so advances in collection and reporting interfaces will continue to streamline future reporting requirements, enhance data integrity, and provide a shareable database between partners to review for specific data analysis and research.

In terms of supporting coordinated implementation of State strategies, the Title II Program frequently provides various reports (e.g., Barriers to Employment, Measurable Skill Gains, Scale Scores, High School Equivalencies, Contact-Hours) to Titles I and III, both at the State/Agency level and the Local Office level; these reports are aggregate, provider-specific, or even individual student-records. To a lesser extent, the local AEFLA sub-recipients also provide requested data to Title IV for co-enrollments' case-management.

Title II's shared reports and custom views are used for research and analyses, program evaluation, case-management, data quality, and monitoring purposes. The Title II Program even provides Local One-Stop Staff with electronic screenshots of necessary data or outcomes for archival [as part of Data Validation protocol]; of course, these screenshots, like all other similar correspondence, are sent in an encrypted format.

2. *The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, provide the State's guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system.*

SDWORKS serves as the primary data collection point for reporting Title I and Title III data and performance measures under WIOA. Along with Title I and Title III functions, SDWORKS is the case management system for TAA, Registered Apprenticeships, National Dislocated Worker Grants, Business Services, RES, SCSEP, and JVSG. SDWORKS is also utilized for state initiatives such as Dakota Roots and the Family First Initiative. While these programs do not have a common application, they do have a common exit.

With the passage of WIOA, DLR released a **South Dakota WIOA Policy Manual** in July 2017. This Policy Manual continues to be modified as guidance from U.S. DOL is released and staff continue to evaluate current policies and procedures. The manual is available on the DLR website at https://dlr.sd.gov/workforce_services/wioa/manual.aspx. Policy changes are communicated through an internal policy memo process. The released policy memo outlines changes to guidance and policies in as much detail as possible. Job service office staff then have the opportunity to review and ask questions during conference calls with labor program specialists and division directors. While the manual and revision process is necessary and continuously improves, it is a lot for all staff to maintain. DLR is continuously working to improve the policy, revision process, and communication with job service office staff to ensure compliance and the best service possible to customers.

At the foundation of the WIOA Policy Manual is the elimination of duplication of efforts when serving individuals. A great example of this was the number of forms participants might sign, depending on program eligibility, to authorize DLR to release their information to partner agencies and businesses. The manual launch included an [Intake and Orientation](#) Policy 5.5, which outlines the requirements for **intake and orientation**, including review of One-Stop Services List. This ensures an individual leaving a job service office after the first visit is informed of all available services and has authorized DLR to begin serving them. Other policies related to intake and enrollment include:

- [Integrated Service Delivery for Job Seekers](#) Policy 3.14 describes the emphasis on enrolling individuals in programs they are eligible for to the greatest extent possible. This increases a participant's access to services and allows for the braiding of resources among programs.
- [Active Resource Coordination and Integrated Resource Teams](#) Policy 5.1 encourages the collaboration among workforce partner to ensure a participant has the right mix of services to help them achieve their goals. This is a customer centered design practice as it is bringing together the service providers and natural supports who are working in unison to assist the participant.

One Stop Partner Program contributions are identified in Policy 3.2 One-Stop System. A list of One Stop Organizations can be found in Policy 3.4. The infrastructure funding agreement of the One Stop can be found in Appendix 2.

3. *State Program and State Board Overview.*

(A) *State Agency Organization. Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.*

Agency Organization

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND REGULATION

As **DLR** is the designated agency for WIOA Title I, II, and III core programs, the Employment Services and Workforce Training divisions also oversee TAA, RES, JVSG, SCSEP, NCRC, Rapid Response, Foreign Labor Certification (FLC), Registered Apprenticeships, Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). The Division of Field Operations oversees 15 One-Stop Career Centers located across the state with additional itinerate sites. The agency also contains the RA Division and the LMIC. DSS is the designated agency overseeing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP). DSS contracts with DLR to offer the employment and training component of these programs.

Cabinet Secretary, Marcia Hultman

Deputy Secretary, Policy and Public Affairs Director, Dawn Dovre

Labor Market Information Center (LMIC) Administrator, Melodee Lane

Optimize Coordinator, Auditor, Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer, State Monitor Advocate – Derek Gustafson

Workforce Development Division

Workforce Development Director, Kendra Ringstmeyer

Labor Program Specialists:

Laura Trapp – RESEA, TAA

Carmen Pacheco – Title I Adult/DW

Aaron Morlock – Title I Youth Career Launch

John Anderson – Title II Adult Education and Literacy

Rebecca Long – Registered Apprenticeships, Business Engagement

Tara Bartekoske – Registered Apprenticeships, TAA

Jenna Bush – TANF, SNAP E&T

Alexandra Warejcka – Title III Wagner-Pesyer, Business Services, SCSEP

Richard Gully – JVSG

Felicia Alspach – Research and Data Analysis

Labor Program Specialists:

Nora Kohlenberg – State Performance Reporting, Data Analysis, Program Evaluation

Deb Halling – Data Validation

Workforce Services Director and WDC Executive Director, Mackenzie Decker – CAREERS NDWG

Labor Program Specialists:

Barb Unruh – GED, NCRC

Heather Nelson – NCRC, Dakota Roots, Family Focus

Labor Program Assistant:

Caitlin Sheppard – *Bring Your 'A' Game*, assists with Family Focus, Dakota Roots, NCRC

Lead Employment Specialists:

Alan McEntaffer – Statewide Training Providers

Caitlin Kemnitz – Statewide Training Providers

Aubree Kaiser – Registered Apprenticeships

Nathan Schlimgen – Virtual Job Service

Sommer VanDewater – Virtual Job Service

Technology Development Division

Technology Development Director, Andrew Szilvasi

Management Analyst:

Jodi Aumer – FBP

Labor Program Specialist:

Taunya Charlton – WOTC, FLC

Labor Program Assistant:

Jill Vining – WOTC, FLC

Gwyn Fischbach – FLC, SDWORKS

Technical Services Administrator, Tom Meyer

Labor Program Specialist:

Jami Burrer – Reporting and Performance

Management Analyst:

Lance Gladis – SDWORKS, Providers, ETPL

Division of Field Operations

Field Operation Director and One-Stop Operator, Bill McEntaffer

Job Service Office Managers

Administrative Services Division

Administrative Services Director, Emily Ward

Accountant III Accounts Payable, Jessica Duvall

Accounting II Workforce Services Grants – Jennifer Kamps

Accountant I Contract Management – Daniel Stalzer

Purchasing and Property Management, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Jim Dornbusch

Reemployment Assistance Division

Reemployment Assistance Director – Pauline Heier

Labor Program Administrator RA Benefits – Dawn Williams

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DHS is the designated state agency for the WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) providers in South Dakota. The Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired are the designated state units for the VR program. The Division of Rehabilitation Services is located in 11 offices throughout the state with 8 of co-located with DLR. The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has four district offices, all co-located with the DHS Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Cabinet Secretary, Shawnie Rechtenbaugh

Deputy Secretary, Tom Martinec

Director of Budget and Finance CFO, Steven Kohler

Division of Rehabilitation Services

Division Director, Eric Weiss

Assistant Director, Bernie Grimme

Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired

Division Director, Gaye Mattke

Assistant Director, Ronda Williams

Developmental Center

Division Director, Barb Abeln

Assistant Director, Debra Sanger

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Division Director, Joey Younie

Assistant Director, Julie Hand

Division of Long Term Services and Supports

Division Director, Yvette Thomas

Assistant Director, Misty Black Bear

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative is the designated agency for the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). A close partnership between the WIOA 167 (NFJP) and Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program State Monitor Advocate within DLR Located in three office locations throughout the state, with one of their offices co-located with DLR in the Sioux Falls Job Service.

The U.S. Forest System oversees the operations of the Boxelder Job Corps Center and Jackson Pierce Public Affairs, Inc. Has the recruitment and placement contract for Job Corps.

Six tribal entities oversee the U.S. DOL Native American Programs in South Dakota. These include the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Whapeton Oyate Sioux Tribe, and Yankton Sioux Tribe.

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program at the secondary education level is overseen by the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE). The post-secondary CTE programs are overseen by the Board of Technical Education.

Program Organizational Chart

<i>Federal Agency</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>South Dakota Agency</i>
U.S. Department of Labor	WIOA Title I Adult	DLR
	WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker	
	WIOA Title I Youth	
	WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services	
	Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	
	Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)	
	Reemployment Assistance Benefits (RA)	
	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	
	Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW)	
	National Farmworker Jobs Programs (NFJP)	Black Hills Special Services Cooperative
	Job Corps	U.S. Forest System
	Native American Programs	Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Sioux Tribe & Yankton Sioux Tribe
U.S. Department of Education	WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)	DLR
	WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)	Department of Human Services (DHS)
	Career and Technical Education Program (CTE)	DOE
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	DSS
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services TO U.S. Department of Labor	Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLR • Experience Works • National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA)

(B) *State Board. Provide a description of the State Board, including*

(i) *Membership Roster. Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.*

State Workforce Board

The WDC membership was grandfathered in as an alternative entity under WIOA Section 101(e). The council consists of 17 members representing private sector business, labor and community-based organizations, and state government. The by-laws for the Workforce Development Council may be found at https://dlr.sd.gov/workforce_services/wdc/documents/wdcbylaws.pdf. These by-laws indicate that membership shall include secretaries of the various state entities or their designees.

Private Sector: Lee Anderson (Chair), Keri Wientjes (Vice Chair), Carl V. Carlson, Carla Gatzke, Chris Houwman, Steve Kolbeck, Rick Larson, Caleb Arceneaux, and Jim Peterson

Community-based Organizations: Dave Bonde

Organized Labor: Mark Rogers and Randy Stainbrook

State Government: Secretary Marcia Hultman (DLR), Laura Scheibe (DOE), Travis Dovre (Economic Development), Brian Maher, Education (Board of Regents), and Kim Ludwig (DHS)

(ii) *Board Activities. Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.*

The WDC Executive Director facilitates quarterly meetings at various locations with agenda items surrounding training opportunities and workforce challenges in South Dakota. The meetings conclude with tours of One-Stop Career Centers and businesses statewide, as well as places like Job Corps and Title II partners. The Council hears testimony at each meeting from participants and businesses finding success through a variety of WIOA programs. As meeting locations move around the state, the WDC also hears from job service office managers and staff about successes and challenges in local areas.

The WDC approves the One-Stop Career Center certifications each year. DLR also reviews major policy changes and fiscal summaries with the Council. DLR staff began introducing the 2020 Unified State Plan in March of 2019, garnering ideas from the Council on the focus and strategies of the goals and vision before a draft began.

After virtual meetings in February 2020 through the pandemic, the Council met in person in June 2021. This meeting included a business meeting in the morning that included a virtual option, then a series of small group discussions were led by DLR job service office ii Managers and Labor Program Specialists. Topics of discussion surrounded strategies in three focus areas of PY21 Action Plans: Partner Development, Business Engagement, and Veterans Outreach for Program Year 2021 (see Strategic Service Delivery section). This meeting proved, once again, the importance of engaging the WDC members in creative ways to encourage input in service delivery. DLR will continue to look for way to meet the expectations of engaging in-person meetings.

4. *Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners.*

(A) *Assessment of Core Programs. Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.*

Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and Partners

South Dakota is a single area state. DLR One-Stop Career Centers across the state administer services for Title I and Title III, four out of the six core programs. DLR also oversee the Title II, Adult Education and Literacy Program offered by seven providers throughout the state. In 2018, DLR developed a **federal performance indicator report**. The report is generated and distributed 15 days after certification of the WIOA quarterly reports and includes the performance indicators outlined in WIOA section 116, direct cost per participant, and case load per full-time employee for the Title I and III programs. These reports provide a visual, broken down by office, of contributions to statewide performance and possible training needs. It also helps administrative staff build better job service office budgets. The reports are

also utilized during the One-Stop certification process.

Job service offices will be reviewed once every three years and certified every four years as outlined in the [One-Stop Certification](#) Policy 3.3 and [Oversight and Monitoring](#) Policy 6.7. Data Validation and Active File Reviews are completed on an annual basis. **One-Stop Career Center reviews** include, but are not limited to:

- The One-Stop Certification checklist, Americans with Disabilities Act review, Equal Opportunity (EO) review, and job service office measurements.
- Program delivery and outcomes (numbers served, new enrollments, etc.).
- WIOA Performance measures (local impact on state performance).
- Reporting accuracy (appropriate use of SDWORKS documentation).
- Record keeping and file maintenance (review of the SDWORKS data management collection per participant).
- Monitoring functions (review of the training sites, peer file reviews, etc.).
- Service delivery (eligibility determinations, EO, fiscal, professional development, priority of service, etc.).
- Staff timecoding (appropriate use of time charges).
- Documentation and justification of allowable fiscal expenditures.
- Compliance with the WIOA Manual.
- One-Stop Career Center Operation Plan.
- Customer satisfaction survey results.

The WIOA Title II Program is also similarly assessed on the Common Measures as defined, prepared, and submitted in its annual Statewide Performance Report for AEFLA. Together the Workforce Development and Administrative Services Division's review providers based on a risk analysis.

Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation) conducts annual performance reviews and participants in the Rehabilitation Services Administration federal review every 5 years. The annual performance is evaluated on the following:

- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor performance reports such as last contact report, activity due report and cases status report;
- Annual Case File Reviews;
- Consumer Satisfaction Survey results;
- Quarterly performance measurement reporting; and
- Annual report to the State Rehabilitation Councils on Program results or outcomes (numbers served, new enrollments, etc.).

(B) Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs. Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

DLR administers a multitude of **partner programs** which provides South Dakota with a One-Stop environment that highly encourages enrollment to the greatest extent. Central Office staff are able to do all-encompassing One-Stop Career Center reviews. Partner program enrollment data is readily available, allowing data analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of enrollment to the greatest extent by program enrollment and by level of service provided. During the One-Stop Career Center Certification, the evaluator seeks information on services and programs available through the One-Stop. During the annual WIOA partner meeting and CPAC meetings, service delivery and referral processes will be discussed. These discussions allow the partners to identify areas for improvement and of future focus.

(C) Previous Assessment Results. Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

An analysis of the participant performance outcomes of On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Occupational Skills Training (OST) was completed. While an OJT is not considered a training service by the federal law for the Title I Youth program, South Dakota's process for OJTs is similar in all Title I programs, offering a clean comparison for OST and OJT.

Looking at all program outcomes, participants receiving an OJT appear to have a better 2nd Quarter after Exit employment rate (+2%) while having a lower 2nd Quarter after Exit median earnings (-\$966.75). Participants receiving an OST have better 2nd Quarter after Exit median earnings and 4th Quarter after Exit employment rates (+9%) than those receiving an OJT. When reviewing individual program outcomes, the results vary. The Title I Adult program produces similar results to all programmatic outcomes, where those receiving an OJT appear to have better immediate employment rates (+9%) and lower median earnings (- \$2606.61) than those receiving an OST. Title I Adult participants receiving an OST also have better 4th Quarter after Exit employment rates (+3%). The results are inconclusive of either an OJT or OST providing better outcomes for all programs. However, policy makers may make some conclusions that dislocated workers tend find more success after OJTs. This is likely because they were previously in the workforce and are taking a foundational skill set with them to their new position. The data also reinforces the need for case managers to appropriately align participants with an OJT that fits their needs and ensure they are prepared for success when taking part in an OST. Continued case management throughout the training experience is essential to help a participant have a successful outcome regardless of the training type.

For Title II, because of the follow-up outcomes' timelines, PY2018-19 was the first occasion under WIOA that the Adult Education and Literacy program had a *full* set of statutory data for the Statewide Performance Report [and the National Reporting System]. Nonetheless, Title II continually monitors primary and secondary measures of Participation and Performance for trends and issues; subsequently, local providers and the Agency revise and update their respective Program Goals based upon both formative and summative assessments.

Considering national comparisons of Performance Outcomes, South Dakota's Title II Program prioritizes guidance, technical assistance, and professional development for obtaining valid and reliable Measurable Skill Gains [via post-testing] throughout this current multi-year grant cycle. The AEFLA Program has recently begun to reemphasize the importance of post-testing rates by developing a new metric of "Combined Post-Testing Rate" to include earned HSEs as part of the post-test rate's calculation; this simple formula better reflects the fidelity of local instruction within ABE and ASE programming. While South Dakota ranked in the Fourth Quartile for PY2020's national *Employment Rates* (Q2 & Q4) and *Median Earnings*, the One-Stop's [common] participants are often resultant of the local economy. Therefore, the Department of Labor and Regulation will continue to provide similar supports for English Language Acquisition, Adult Basic Education, and Adult Secondary Education—all through the lens of College and Career Readiness.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Programs completed the three-year Comprehensive Assessment (CSNA) in April 2019. Each State Rehabilitation Advisory Council worked with the Vocational Rehabilitation Programs in developing new goals and strategies. These new goals/strategies are identified in the Vocational Rehabilitation section of the Unified State Plan.

(D) Evaluation. Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

DLR is currently working with the Government Research Bureau (GRB) at the University of South Dakota to evaluate South Dakota's alignment of Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) programs and Title I services. DLR and GRB continue to work together to determine the best way to move forward that is beneficial to both the individuals utilizing DLR services and the program evaluation. This includes potentially developing a random assignment process to better evaluate DLR services.

As DLR continues to develop service delivery models, DLR's Data Analysis team is involved to help establish logic models and develop outcomes. The Data Analysis team then develops program performance report specifications based on activities, outputs, and the outcomes established. This process includes formally reporting to Labor Program Specialist of those outcomes.

South Dakota will utilize participant's post-program outcomes to assist with research and evaluation of WIOA core programs. The Research and Data Analyst program specialist will evaluate the data and work with the program directors

and program specialists to address trends.

WIOA Title II, in the evaluation of both the program and its local providers, considers Participation and Performance across primary and secondary outcomes. Primary measures (i.e., Common Measures) include Measurable Skill Gains, Employment Rates (Q2 & Q4), Median Earnings, and Credential Rates; secondary measures include earned High School Equivalencies, post-testing rates, and student contact-hours. Analyses of these primary and secondary metrics, as well as some tertiary benchmarks, inform much of the Agency's targeted guidance, technical assistance, and professional development.

The Title II Program also uses national quartile-rankings across the primary measures to negotiate its Performance Targets. Beyond sharing its annual Statewide Performance Report with the other Core Programs and the Workforce Development Council, Title II has been actively collaborating with Title I's Data Analyst as part of the overall WIOA evaluation efforts.

5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs.

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

(A) For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

(i) Youth activities in accordance with WIOA section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

Title I Funds

DLR Job Service Offices serve as the provider of WIOA Title I Youth services. DLR does not have contracts or agreements for the provision of youth services. DLR does partner with various training providers, businesses, and providers of support services to meet the needs of our customer and make the 14 youth elements available.

The DLR Administrative Services Division identifies funding available for **Title I Youth** participants and distributes into four budgets, In-School Work Experience and Out-of-School Work Experience (counts toward 20% work experience expenditure rate), In-School Other and Out-of-School Other (does not count toward the 20% work experience expenditure rate). This provides the ability for DLR to track funding spent on Out-of-School Youth and work experiences. In 2020, DLR consolidated program funds into one statewide budget rather than breaking out by office. This allows for consistency with other programs and will allow One-Stop Career Centers with the most need access to additional funding. The SDWORKS management information system is used by employment specialists in the Job Service Offices to obligate funding and Job Service Office managers to approve payments. The Administrative Services Division then utilizes this information to process payments.

(ii) Adult and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

(iii) Dislocated worker employment and training activities in accordance with WIOA section 133(b)(2) and based on data and weights assigned.

DLR Job Service Offices serve as the provider of WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services. DLR does not have contracts or agreements for the provision of career services. DLR does partner with various training providers, businesses, and providers of support services to meet the needs of our customer and make the full array of individualized, training, and support services available.

Based on the grant award for the **Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker** programs, the Administrative Services Division identifies funding available for participants. In July 2020, DLR consolidated Job Service Office budgets into two statewide budgets, Adult and Dislocated Worker, allowing for those offices most in need to have access. DLR Employment Specialists obligate funding and Job Service Managers approve payment through the SDWORKS management information system. The Administrative Services Division then utilizes this information to process payments. DLR enrolls all individuals who can provide authorization to work in the United States and Selective Service registration, if applicable, in need of individualized career services into the WIOA Title I Adult program. However, DLR focuses a priority service to adults who are basic skills deficient, receiving public assistance, or low income. Funding is reserved for those who meet this priority of service or are identified as having a disability, being an ex-offender, or lacking a high school diploma. These populations were identified to support partnerships with other service agencies

including WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Corrections, and WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy.

(B) For Title II:

- (i)** *Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.*

Title II Funds

DLR held its most recent AEFLA grant competition in spring 2020 to determine the distribution of **Title II** funds. These multi-year grants were awarded via OCTAE-approved processes, as confirmed by the Agency's 2019 Targeted Virtual Monitor of the 2017 Request for Proposal (RFP). Because South Dakota is a single-area state, the Title II funds are made available to any eligible provider serving any of South Dakota's 66 counties. This current multi-year grant cycle began 01 July 2020 in accordance with the Unified State Plan and the federal provisions regulating WIOA's direct and equitable access—WIOA Section 231.

The methodology used by DLR to allocate funds prioritizes each proposal's service-area needs, scope, goals, efficacy, inclusion of special populations, and potential levels of student-access. A "modified foundation formula" is used to assist with the allocation; this formula factors a base-funding amount by students' program type with the aforementioned priorities, and then accounts for a provider's geographic location(s).

DLR is responsible for determining whether an Applicant is deemed an "eligible provider of demonstrated effectiveness"; therefore, as part of its grant competition, each Applicant must provide performance data on its record of improving the skills of eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy. This must be demonstrated in the following content domains: Reading, Writing, Math, and English Language Acquisition. An Applicant must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, as well as transition to postsecondary education and training.

The Agency's RFP articulates these thresholds of Demonstrated Effectiveness for both incumbent/previous Applicants and new Applicants; those Applicants subsequently determined "eligible" continue in the review process.

- (ii)** *Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers.*

DLR announces the availability of funds on its organizational website, within South Dakota's procurement portal, through Public Notice in major newspapers, and through direct emails. Such emails are sent to existing local program providers, networks of community partners, and any entities which expressed interest during the previous grant cycle(s). All Applicants receive the same instructions and information prior to submission; additionally, all eligible proposals are reviewed and scored in a consistent manner. All relevant materials are also posted on DLR's WIOA Sub-Recipient webpage, including the Scoring Rubric and the Response to Written Inquiries.

- (C)** *Vocational Rehabilitation Program: In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.*

Title IV Funds

The vocational rehabilitation grant is drawn down by DHS. Funds are distributed with 80% going to the Division of Rehabilitation Services and 20% to the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired through mutual agreement regarding distribution of funds.

6. Program Data

- (A)** *Data Alignment and Integration. Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs*

included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

- (i) Describe the State's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.*
- (ii) Describe the State's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan.*
- (iii) Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs (including design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc.) and how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals*

Integration

As mentioned throughout previous sections of the South Dakota Unified State Plan, three different case management information systems are used by the six **WIOA core programs**, each designed to meet the needs of the programs it serves. Only Title I and Title III use the same SDWORKS system. DLR and DHS have developed and are updating on an ongoing basis interface mechanisms between the SDWORKS, FACES (Title IV), and LACES (Title II), in order to communicate with one another. This approach will allow for a data collection and reporting system that eliminates the need to require any agency to change their legacy systems in terms of process and actions but improve capabilities pertaining to data collection and reporting. To make these management information systems interoperable and enhance data sharing amongst management information systems of the six core programs, South Dakota will:

- Develop strategies between the South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) and vendors of the management information systems.
- Develop electronic referral process between programs.
- Share employer database to improve annual reporting.
- Improve collection of unemployment insurance wage records from other states; and
- Combine or coordinate payroll features for work experiences.

This integrated approach serves many diverse populations, including unemployed individuals, to receive career services and training services when appropriate to improve service delivery and reduce duplicative effort. This data sharing project between DLR and DHS legacy case management systems will:

- Improve services to customers by allowing Job Service staff to be aware, in real time, if an individual is currently a participant or has been a past participant in either any program for either agency;
- Improve communication between WIOA programs to coordinate services and improve case management;
- Reduce duplication of application information provided by participants;
- Reduce duplicative data collection and verification for the completion of trainings; and
- Improve customer service, case management, reporting, and performance outcomes.

Ultimately, data sharing will align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience. WIOA programs will work together more seamlessly.

With representation from each of the core programs, the Workforce Development Council will provide guidance, support, and direction of the required data sharing necessary to support the alignment of common intake, data collection, case management, and reporting. Because it is not budgetarily or technologically feasible to develop a "one MIS fits all" approach at this time, the necessity of providing performance and programmatic capabilities as earlier described has been determined. The various methodologies of operating a stand-alone and an integrated multi-MIS system based on interfacing has been discussed with WDC. The WDC has representation for each of the four titles to provide additional feedback to the private sector members to further support the direction of integrated MIS. The WDC further agrees the integrated approach is the best choice at reaching a performance and program-oriented outcome for the Titles.

- (iv) Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2)).*

DLR (Titles I, II, and III) and VR (Title IV) will submit reports required under section 116, performance accountability separately. DLR will submit reports for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, and Title III Wagner-Peyser. DLR is developing mechanisms to enhance reporting outcomes through data agreements with the State Wage

Interchange System, National Student Clearinghouse, and GED outcomes.

The Title II Program has contracted its Management Information System with the same vendor-partner for two decades. Title II also avails itself of the State Wage Interchange System, National Student Clearinghouse, and High School Equivalency outcomes from GED Testing Service for its data-matched outcomes submitted to the National Reporting System.

(B) *Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success. Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.*

Post-Program Outcomes

Follow-up Services are made available to all Title I participants. Because of dual enrollment policies, this group includes RES, TAA, and TANF participants. While WIOA requires Follow Up for Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker participants placed in unsubsidized employment (TEGL 19-16). DLR requires 12 months of Follow-up Services for all participants with the exception of those who refuse Follow Up services. This requirement maintains consistency for job service staff. Follow-up Services are based on the individual needs. For Title I Adults, Follow-up Services may consist of providing support and guidance to facilitate sustained employment, advancement, or personal development. For Title I Youth participants, Follow-up Services are broader and may include support and guidance to facilitate sustained employment, supportive services, adult mentoring, financial literacy education, career exploration services, and transition services for postsecondary education.

For Title II, follow-up is conducted on Employment Rates (Q2 & Q4), Median Earnings, and Credential Rates. Both DLR and the Board of Regents assist the AEFLA Program with the Data Matching [elements] required for accurate, verifiable National Reporting System submissions.

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Programs utilize the VR FACES to enter in post-program employment and post-secondary education outcomes. Reports are sent to the VR Counselors prior to the end of the quarter identifying the individuals who need the quarterly post-program outcome completed.

(C) *Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data. Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.*

Reemployment Assistance Wage Data

The DLR Reemployment Assistance (RA) Division is the designated UI agency for South Dakota and required One-Stop partner (section 121(b)(1)(B)(xi), WIOA). This wage data, including South Dakota data and other state wage data through WRIS, is:

- **Accurate** – related to the collection and use of wage records to determine performance accountability, data validation of cases, and evaluating the effectiveness of the cases and their outcomes is much higher and reliable than relying upon self-reported data collection such as graduate, employer, or job seeker surveys.
- **Accessible** – The broad coverage of UI wages and its associated data collection is estimated at 99.7% of all wage and salary earners and 89% of the total civilian labor force (self-employed individuals account for the difference). This is according to the Ways and Means Committee of the U.S. Congress. The UI reporting system easy access to required data for almost every WIOA participant in a performance-based program. Other state initiatives can also utilize the data as long as the scope and content of the data being collected and publicized meets applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- **Longitudinal** – States are required to maintain the most recent two-years of data elements online to support the administration of UI claims. Many states have a longer retention rate than two years and as a result, quarterly UI wage data can be linked to create a longitudinal record of earnings.

The cost-effectiveness of using UI wage data is appealing for states working within budget restraints. Generally, the cost of a state to access and parse UI wage record data to determine outcomes and performance measures of WIOA participants.

(D) *Privacy Safeguards. Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.*

Security

Privacy safeguards are incorporated to ensure protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from employers, job seekers, and staff. These protections and security protocols are built around all aspects of federal regulations applicable to PII, UI regulations, WIOA regulations, and the General Education Provisions Act. Further, all applicable laws and regulations for security, privacy, and confidentiality are followed as prescribed under the Internal Revenue Service and U.S. Social Security Administration.

The South Dakota Bureau of Information Technology (BIT) oversees IT security for all agencies. This includes security for adaptive technology, buildings, digital conferencing hardware, GIS/GPS, networks, servers, software for agency use, software for development use, staff hardware, and vendor and client security requirements necessary to use state resources and/or be involved in the development of hardware or software used for state resources.

DLR works with BIT to employ the security protocols required under federal and state requirements to protect PII and sensitive information of all customers. Procedures are in place to recognize, intercept, and mitigate any possible data breach.

7. *Priority of Service for Veterans*

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

Veterans

DLR has implemented processes for veterans and eligible spouses (covered persons) to self-identify as eligible for **priority of service** at the point of entry in a DLR job service office or during use of the DLR website. Covered persons are given priority over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in all programs funded by U.S. DOL and are entitled to the precedence and/or access over non-covered persons for services. DLR has prioritized efforts to identify and engage with veterans in our state by establishing this as one of three goals in Job Service Office action plans. A variety of materials, including name badge ribbons for staff, clings to display on staff's cubical, floor mats, table-top banners, large banners, and brochures, are under development to encourage veterans and covered persons to identify as such when conversing with DLR staff. The Veterans Triage Assessment has been revamped to provide guidance to staff completing this in hopes of increasing our ability to identify JVSG eligible veterans and veterans eligible for **priority of service**. Statewide training was offered virtually to all staff on how to use this form. This training has been recorded for future use.

- For the purpose of implementing the priority of service, a broader definition of veteran is used. Under this definition the term "veteran" means a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Active service includes full-time federal service in the National Guard or a Reserve component. This definition of "active service" does not include full-time duty performed strictly for training purposes (such as weekend or annual training), nor does it include full-time active duty performed by National Guard personnel who are mobilized by State rather than Federal Authorities (such as natural disasters). The eligibility for spouse for Priority of Service means any of the below:
- Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability.

- Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time application for priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:
 1. Missing in action;
 2. Captured in the line of duty by a hostile force; or
 3. Forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power;
- Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veteran Affairs; or
- Any veteran who died while a disability, (as defined above), was in existence.

DLR provides employment-counseling service to all veterans who need assistance with vocational adjustment. To determine if a veteran or eligible spouse meets the eligibility criteria to receive services from a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist, non-JVSG staff in DLR One-Stop Career Centers will conduct **the Veterans Triage Assessment** to determine if the eligible veteran or eligible spouse or eligible person has a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) or any other authorized category approved by U.S. DOL. Once eligibility is determined and Individualized Career Services (ICS) are needed, the non-JVSG staff person will make a referral to the DVOP. If the DVOP is unavailable, staff will assist the SBE individual with their immediate needs while scheduling a follow up appointment with a DVOP. Eligible individuals will receive an Objective Assessment to identify employment barriers, needs, goals, and skills to assist in the development of an Employment Plan. The employment plan will provide short-term objectives to assist the customer in overcoming their employment barriers and develop skills to gain employment.

- Priority of Service will include: Priority in all services provided by local public employment offices;
- Provide information about training, rehabilitation, and other benefits or services related to employment, and agencies where benefits or services may be obtained;
- Cooperation with public and private organizations and committees to promote employment opportunities for veterans, and to facilitate their placement in available job openings;
- Facilitate the employment of job-ready veterans;
- Designation of one or more employees, preferably veterans, in each office to discharge the duties prescribed in Title 38, U.S. Code, Chapter 41 as amended; and
- Cooperation with businesses and other agencies in establishing training programs that justify the need for training and provide statistical information pertinent and useful in the planning and operation of training programs that afford the veteran or eligible spouse the greatest opportunity for gainful employment.

The operations of the DLR One-Stop Career Centers are intended to direct special attention to the barriers veterans face, and to afford individualized career services. Such service is not only a legal and moral obligation, but also a necessary condition for efficiency in DLR job service office operations. Partnership between DLR and the Director for Veterans Employment and Training (DVET) is a necessity. The State JVSG Program Coordinator, in cooperation with the DVET, will conduct self-assessments and visit DLR One-Stop Career Centers to observe or evaluate operations when necessary or requested. The State JVSG Program Coordinator will:

- Facilitate self-assessments and serve as the point of contact for all self-assessment activities;
- Assist in coordinating all review activities within the state;
- Review and analyze reports and provide all reports and access to records pertinent to assessments;
- Maintain contact, in-person or electronically, with DLR One-Stop Career Centers to ensure Priority of Service signage and other self-identification materials for covered persons are properly placed in the DLR One-Stop Career Centers;
- Assist validation assessment reviews with the DVET if needed;
- As appropriate, provide or arrange for technical assistance and training on matters identified;

Policies of DLR include:

- The facilities of the state agencies designated under the Wagner-Peyser Act shall be utilized fully to provide an effective job counseling and employment-placement service to veterans.

- The state agency shall comply with the provisions of Title 38, U.S. Code, Chapter 41, as amended, and shall cooperate fully with the DVET to enable him or her to discharge the responsibilities specified in Section 4103 of Title 38.
- The state agency shall provide an effective placement service for all veterans, to secure for them maximum job opportunities in the field of gainful employment.

8. *Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities.*
Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Accessibility

Each DLR job service office receives an **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** compliance review once every three years at minimum as part of the One-Stop Certification process. The uses the ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. During the review, each applicable section is scored for compliance with a "yes" or "no." All "no" responses are documented with photos and then addressed in an action plan to bring the section into compliance. All "no" responses are categorized by low, moderate, and high effort. The action plan includes a timeline to correct any long-term deficiencies. Most of the physical findings need to be resolved by the landlord. DLR notifies the landlord of the deficiencies and begins negotiations to address the issues.

At the conclusion of each ADA review, the reviewer recaps the findings with the office manager and staff are given direction on actions they can take immediately to temporarily remediate issues (if any) until a permanent resolution is put in place. The previous finding reports are reviewed when the next ADA review is completed with each office. These findings are included in the One Stop Certification report provided to the Workforce Development Council.

9. *Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop System for Individuals who are English Language Learners*
Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

Limited English proficient (LEP) individuals must be able to access and participate in WIOA programs and activities in a manner equally consistent and effective to that offered to those proficient in English. One-Stop Career Centers and partners take reasonable steps to ensure LEP individuals receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to the programs, services, and information, free of charge. To meet these requirements, DLR contracts with CTS Language Link Services of Vancouver, WA, to provide over-the-phone interpretation services to LEP individuals (see DLR Nondiscrimination Plan, Element 4 F. Access Accommodations 2. Limited English Proficient at dlr.sd.gov/equal_opportunity).

To ensure staff can provide equal services to LEP individuals, DLR provides technical assistance and training. Technical assistance include is outline in Element 2 of the DLR Nondiscrimination Plan. Superficially, "Point 2 Your Language" Poster (Exhibit J), Language Link Tips (Exhibit L), and a Language Link Process guide (Exhibit N). DLR also provides training to staff, which covers the technical assistance mentioned above. Additionally, the Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer provides LEP training to the job service office, or One-Stop, managers.

Reviews ensure each One-Stop Career Center is compliant with WIOA section 188 and 29 CFR 38. These reviews, similar to the ADA process, take place during the One-Stop Certification every three years at minimum. LEP is covered in the monitoring process, during the employee interviews, and during the Equal Opportunity data analysis. Each of these aspects are also outlined in the DLR Nondiscrimination Plan.

IV.COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS.

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

As discussed in previous sections, South Dakota has Title I, Title II and Title III under the direction of the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) while the Department of Human Services (DHS) has oversight of Title IV. The WIOA core program staff meet as needed. This group is called the a Core Program Alignment Consortium (CPAC). The CPAC was formed as the first WIOA Unified State Plan was developed and consists of state level staff representing the core programs and a variety of other workforce programs. These meetings provide an opportunity for information sharing, policy development, and the facilitation of specific work groups. Locally, workforce partners meet on a quarterly basis at minimum. These partner meetings provide an opportunity to share policy changes, identify areas for collaboration, and areas of need. Further, several workforce partner agencies are involved in the Workforce Development Council (WDC) to offer guidance and direction for the workforce programs in South Dakota.

In 2019, Cabinet Secretaries of DLR and DHS gathered a workgroup to determine the most efficient, sustainable, comprehensive, and seamless method of delivery of WIOA services to all South Dakotans. Specifically, changing agency organization to move staff and services funded under Title IV from DHS to DLR. This project catalyzed discussions to improve service delivery, infrastructure, data management cost savings, data sharing, and reporting, however, a clear method to neatly extract Title IV from DHS and relocate to DLR did not arise, and the costs involved to make the change would outweigh any benefit. As a result, the recommendation to the Governor of South Dakota was to enhance collaborative initiatives and strengthen service delivery among the WIOA Core Program under the current structure. Specific strategies are identified in Section II of the 2020 State Plan.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES (for all core programs)

The Unified State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;
2.	The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;
3.	The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;
4.	The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;
5.	The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;
6.	The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);
7.	The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;
8.	The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;
9.	The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;
10.	The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);
11.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and
12.	Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

a) General Requirements

1. Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas.

- (A) Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State
- (B) Describe the process used for designating local areas, including procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “performed successfully” and “sustained fiscal integrity” in accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the process used for identifying regions and planning regions under section 106(a) of WIOA. This must include a description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions
- (C) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5) of WIOA relating to designation of local areas

Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I

South Dakota is a single area state with one state board. The Workforce Development Council (WDC) provides guidance and direction for the entire state.

- (D) Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding.

An **appeals process** is in place when Parties cannot reach agreement. Disputes between Parties will be attempted to be resolved informally. If a resolution is not found, the Parties will send a written letter to the Executive Director of the WDC. The Executive Director will have 10 days to acknowledge receipt of the dispute and transmit the letter to the Council members. The WDC then has 30 business days to convene and hear testimony from all Parties involved in the dispute. After hearing testimony, WDC has an additional 30 business days to issue a formal resolution for the issue. The final resolution will be issued by the WDC Chair.

2. Statewide Activities

- 1. Provide State policies or guidance for the statewide workforce development system and for use of State funds for workforce investment activities.

DLR follows WIOA guidance for required and allowable activities of the **statewide funding**. The DLR Cabinet Secretary reviews all requests and provides a final determination. Allowable funding determinations are based on Governor’s priorities. Statewide funds will be utilized for:

- Data management system updates and maintenance;
- Monitoring and oversight;
- Evaluations;
- Trainings;
- Rapid Response activities; and
- The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

DLR Statewide funding may support efforts related to:

- Providing the opportunity for individuals referred by businesses, but who are not participants, take the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC);
- Incumbent Worker Training;
- Career Launch Youth engagement efforts;
- Public outreach;
- Jobs for America’s Graduates;
- *Bring Your ‘A’ Game* soft skills trainings for businesses and students; and
- WIOA Title II activities.

Oversight of this funding is provided by the DLR Administrative Services Division. All state and federal procurement laws, policies, and procedures are adhered to. Subrecipient agreements are monitored based on risk assessments.

- 2. Describe how the State intends to use Governor’s set aside funding. Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. States also should describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers.

The WIOA Title I statewide funding will be utilized for required activities, including:

- Rapid Response needs;
- Development and maintenance of SDWORKS and the ETPL;
- Training staff; and
- Monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating programs; and development.

Other allowable activities will include public outreach and several efforts to assist workforce development in the state. Priorities for funding are analyzed and evaluated on an annual basis, if not more frequently, and are based on budget availability, needs, and Governor's priorities.

It is the policy of South Dakota to connect with business regarding a possible layoff or closing within two days of garnering any information. Information is provided to company leadership and employees regarding all the services available through DLR. **Rapid Response** meetings can take place at the work site, the nearest job service office, or an off-site location. Partners in the communities who provide various services are invited to attend the Rapid Response meeting and present their program information to the workers. Funding may be utilized for meeting space for Rapid Response meetings, job fairs for the workers, or advertising to alert affected workers of the events.

Early intervention and comprehensive pre-layoff assistance is the foundation of the layoff aversion strategy which focuses on eliminating or minimizing the length of time impacted workers are unemployed. Building and maintaining relationships with the business community is critical. Regional DLR staff typically have established relationships with local businesses which allow for early warning of potential layoffs, as well as allow opportunity for early intervention to help avert a layoff through services, including Registered Apprenticeships and incumbent worker training.

3. In addition, describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities.

Rapid Response activities include, but are not limited to:

- Informational and direct re-employment services for workers, such as:
 - information and support for filing RA benefits,
 - information on the impacts of layoff on health coverage and other benefits,
 - information on and referrals to career and training services,
 - re-employment-focused workshops and services ;
- Delivery of solutions to address the needs of businesses to transition, provided across the business lifecycle (expansion and contraction), including comprehensive business engagement and layoff aversion strategies and activities designed to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment;
- Convening, brokering, and facilitating the connections, networks and partners to ensure the ability to provide assistance to dislocated workers and their families such as home heating assistance, legal aid, and financial advice; and
- Strategic planning, research, and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage economic change.
- In the event of a natural disaster, such as tornado, flood, earthquake, drought, storm or similar events caused by nature, emergency rapid response coordinates services quickly to convene partners who will be dedicated to help the community navigate difficult times and address the short-term impacts of such an event. As needed, it also includes coordinating efforts with the state and local emergency management teams and Federal Emergency Management Agency. Emergency Operation Centers or Rapid Responses may be established. Job Service Office staff are onsite to assist individuals with accessing unemployment or disaster unemployment, and connecting individuals to other state and local organizations.

4. Describe how the State provides early intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. (Section 134(a)(2)(A).) This description must include how the State disseminates benefit information to provide trade-affected workers in the groups identified in the TAA petitions with an accurate understanding of the provision of TAA benefits and services in such a way that they are transparent to the trade-affected dislocated worker applying for them (Trade Act Sec. 221(a)(2)(A) and Sec. 225; Governor-Secretary Agreement). Describe how the State will use funds that have been reserved for Rapid Response to provide services for every worker group that files

a TAA petition.

- DLR Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Labor Programs Specialists have made it a goal to meet with Economic Development organizations throughout the state to provide information about the TAA program and other workforce programs in the event a layoff takes place. Business' awareness of these resources for laid off employees allows them to proactively connect with DLR in the event a layoff may occur.
- Employees are informed of Dislocated Worker or TAA Rapid Response events through their employer or directly through DLR by mail, email, or social media and newspaper ads. Job Service Office staff work with the employer to identify appropriate meeting times for the employees.
- When informed of a layoff, Job Service Office staff will meet with impacted employees. These meetings share resources to reduce the burden from being laid off and to assist the individual in returning to work. During a Rapid Response meeting, individuals are provided a folder with a number of resources and information sheets. Every item in the packet is reviewed during the meeting. Workforce and community partners are gathered to share how their programs may assist the impacted employees. These partners may include but are not limited to representatives from: the Reemployment Division, technical schools or university, local career learning center, and social service agencies. A typical Rapid Response meeting takes anywhere from an hour to an hour and a half based on questions from the audience.
- A Rapid Response meeting can take place in a variety of methods. If possible, group meetings are scheduled prior to the closure or layoff and are held at the worksite. However, when this is not feasible, they can also be done at the local Job Service or in a rented meeting room in a location convenient to the impacted employees.
- If an on-site meeting is not feasible, this process can be completed virtually. When a Dislocated Worker or Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Rapid Response is completed virtually, emails are sent out to the affected workers with the time, date and instructions for joining the meeting. If an email is not available, individuals are notified by mail and through other means such as social media.
- If an employee is not able to attend a scheduled meeting, packets of information are left with the employer to disseminate or sent via mail to the individuals. Employees are encouraged to meet with a Job Service Office representative individually to review the information. A recorded Rapid Response and list of resources are also available on the DLR website for employers and employees.

b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements

1. Work-Based Training Models.

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

Work-Based Training

In South Dakota, **On-the-Job Training (OJT)** is the most common, efficient, and effective way for a participant of the Title I programs to gain the knowledge and skills essential to the performance of the job and maintain long term employment. DLR job service office staff work with businesses in their communities to create a strong relationships and opportunities for OJT and Registered Apprenticeships. These training programs employ individuals who may be harder to serve, lost their jobs at no fault of their own, lack experience, and/or looking for a long-term commitment to a specific occupation. While not common in South Dakota, **Customized Training** provides 45% of the training costs through the Title I program funding. Due to funding limitations with the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, it is ideal way to stretch training funding to enable the business to invest in their employees and provide and increase retention. Prior to this state plan, DLR utilized statewide funding to develop an incumbent worker training model. However, due to budget limitations, this was discontinued. The state has plans to re-establish the offering of this training in 2022.

Work-based learning programs foster innovation in job placement strategies. South Dakota, like much of the nation, is experiencing a shortage of trained heavy and tractor trailer truck drivers. While the need is great many companies are hesitant to hire individuals with less than two years of driving experience due to increased insurance costs and greater liability risks. This presents a challenge for DLR supported participants who earn their CDL through Occupational Skills Training (OST). Utilizing OJTs allows DLR to help alleviate the extra costs associated with hiring a recent CDL recipient.

Many Title I **Youth** participants take advantage of job shadows, Work Experiences, OJT, and pre-apprenticeships. These

opportunities allow career path discovering while gaining soft skills. DLR has worked in partnership with WIOA Title II providers to offer paid work experiences alongside GED® studies.

A Work Experience accompanied by robust case management can anticipate and resolve common workplace issues. On-site monitoring continued career readiness trainings, Supportive Services, and conflict resolution are a key component for success.

2. Registered Apprenticeships

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

Registered Apprenticeship Strategies

DLR remains committed to expanding Registered Apprenticeship opportunities on multiple levels. The development and ongoing support of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) continue to be encouraged through contract agreements, policy guidance, and technical assistance. With increased attention on various forms of work-based learning and workforce needs, DLR expects apprenticeships to become more prevalent in South Dakota. Encouraging participants to simultaneously earn wages and learn higher technical skills through an apprenticeship will increase success in the workplace. Recognizing the value to integrating RAP's with Wagner-Peyser and Title I programs reinforces that employment and training opportunities are provided to individuals in need of such services. DLR staff provide case management services for apprentices to assist with employee retention.

Using U.S. DOL grant funding and building on the success of DLR's innovative strategies, South Dakota will remain focused on supporting businesses and job seekers. Three areas of activity are included in the States overall apprenticeship **goals**:

1. Advance and highlight innovative practices for:
 - engaging employers and industry partners;
 - assessing the viability of industry sectors to target for apprenticeships;
 - expanding access to under-represented populations including females, Native Americans, limited-English proficient individuals, youth 16-24, individuals with disabilities
 - aligning apprenticeship resources and programs across all partners;
2. Identify immediate opportunities to strengthen and expand apprenticeships; and
3. Increase DLR staff capacity.

3. Training Provider Eligibility Procedure

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

ETPL Requirements

PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

Types of Entities Eligible to Apply - §680.410(d)

Providers of training services are required to be on the South Dakota ETPL to receive WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding for training services. Training services are provided through Individual Training Agreements (ITA). Eligible training providers allowed to receive funding through an ITA:

- Institutions of higher education with programs leading to a recognized postsecondary credential.
- Entities that carry out programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act (29 U.S.C. 50).
- Eligible providers of Adult Education and Literacy activities under WIOA Title II if such activities are provided in combination with training services.
- Public and private providers of a program of training services, which may include community-based organization and joint labor-management organizations
- A local workforce development board, if it meets the conditions of WIOA sec. 107(g)(1).

Registered Apprenticeship Program Providers - §680.450(b) §680.460(c) §680.470(a-e)

Under WIOA Title I, Registered Apprenticeship Programs are automatically eligible for placement on the state approved

ETPL. Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsors that would like ETP inclusion must provide the following information in the application:

- Occupations included within the Registered Apprenticeship Program.
- Name and address of the Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsor.
- Names and addresses of the Related Technical Instruction provider(s) and the location(s) of instruction if different from the program sponsor's address.
- Method and length of instruction.
- Number of active apprentices.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements, a period of initial eligibility, or initial eligibility procedures as other providers due to the detailed application and vetting procedures required by the U.S. DOL Office of Apprenticeship. Registered Apprenticeship Programs will remain on the ETPL until the:

- Program has been deregistered by a finding of the U.S. DOL.
- Program sponsor has notified the State that it no longer wants the program to be included on the list.
- Program sponsor has intentionally provided inaccurate information.
- Program has violated any provision of Title I of WIOA or the WIOA regulation, including 29 CFR §38 for no less than two years.

Note: Pre-apprenticeship programs do not receive the same WIOA exceptions allowed for RAPs. Pre-apprenticeship programs seeking initial or continued eligibility to the ETPL must follow the same process requirements as other non-RAP training providers, as described in this policy. - §680.470(f)

Reciprocity - §680.520(a-b)

DLR may enter into a reciprocal or other agreement with another state. Training in another state will only be considered for an eligible participant if:

- Similar training is not available in South Dakota; and
- There is employment waiting for the participant in South Dakota upon completion of training as verified by the employer; and
- The training provider is active and in good standing on the ETPL in the state of the provider's physical address; and
- The training provider has registered and supplied the required provider and program information in SDWORKS; and
- All other conditions for training eligibility, as identified in the WIOA manual, are met and justified.

A DLR Program Specialist must approve all ITA's with out-of-state training providers prior to a commitment of funding. Current agreements can be viewed on the Eligible Training Providers and Programs page. For more information on establishing an agreement with DLR, email DLRETP@state.sd.us.

Exempt Training Providers - §680.530(A)

Providers of On-the-Job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training, internships, paid or unpaid Work Experience, or transitional jobs are not subject to the requirements applicable to entities listed on the ETPL and are not included on the state list of eligible providers and programs.

Equal Opportunity

Eligible training providers are subject to the equal opportunity and nondiscrimination requirements contained in WIOA sec. 188 and implementing regulations of 29 CFR §38.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Types of Programs Eligible - §680.420(a-d)

A program must provide one or more courses or classes leading to one or more of the following:

- *Industry-recognized certificate or certification*

- *Certificate of completion of a registered apprenticeship*
- *License recognized by the Federal government, State of South Dakota, another state with which South Dakota has a reciprocal agreement*
- *Community or technical college certificate of completion*
- *Associate degree*
- *Baccalaureate degree*
- *Secondary school diploma or its equivalent*
- *Employment*
- *Measurable skill gains toward a credential described above or employment*

Programs Not Eligible

Programs associated solely with job readiness, basic skills, career exploration, and reading literacy programs will not be eligible for inclusion on the ETPL.

INITIAL APPLICATION PROCESS §680.450(A-B)(E)(G-H)

Initial Program Application Requirements

To be considered for inclusion on the ETPL, a training provider must create a Training Provider account in SDWORKS. Once DLR has activated the account, providers must submit an application for each training program, including an application for each delivery style (online, in-person, hybrid). The training provider must submit a complete program application in SDWORKS, including information regarding:

- Institution Type;
- Contact Information;
- Federal Employer Number/FEIN;
- Website;
- Program description;
- Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code;
- Information on training services that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its equivalent;
- College's or company's accreditations (national or State);
- Verifiable information about performance for the most recent twelve (12) month period that includes:
 - Completion Rate
 - Entered Employment Rate
 - Median Earnings
 - Credential Attainment Rate

****Note:** Training providers unable to supply initial performance documentation requirements may receive conditional approval from DLR until a determination can be made based on additional performance data. The conditional approval letter will outline the approval expiration*

- Training programs offered in partnership with businesses must provide one of the following:
 - a letter of support from a local employer or employers;
 - evidence of the existence of an employer-based advisory committee;
 - letter of support by an industry association or organization; or
 - letter of support from a local economic development organization.
- Information addressing the alignment of training with in-demand industry sectors or occupations;
- Program prerequisites;
- Necessary program equipment;
- Class time, length, form, and mode of delivery;
- Program duration;
- Location(s) where the program is offered;
- Program costs; • Verification of nondiscrimination policy;
- Verification of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA);

- Agree to accept the terms and conditions of DLR Conditions and Assurances; and
- Upon approval, submit the Provider Payment Authorization form.

Initial Program Review Process

Prospective training providers may apply at any time on a year-round basis; eligibility will be open and rolling. All applications must be submitted through SDWORKS and use the Eligible Provider Training Manual. Providers must submit separate applications for each individual program. If multiple training delivery formats (in-person only, online-only, hybrid) are available, an application must be submitted for each delivery format.

A DLR Program Specialist will review initial program applications to verify Initial Program Application Requirements are completed. The training provider contact will be informed via email of approval or denial status, or if additional information is needed, within 45 days of submission.

Once approved, training providers and/or programs will be listed on the ETPL. The initial eligibility period expires the following July 31. The provider must then apply for Continued Eligibility on a biennial basis by July 31 at the end of the eligibility period, except Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY PROGRAMS §680.460(A)(F)(G)(I)

Continued Program Application Requirements After the initial or conditional eligibility period, providers must submit an application to meet continued eligibility requirements, as authorized by WIOA sec. 122. The training provider must review and update the continued eligibility program in SDWORKS in accordance with the Eligible Provider Training Manual and include information on:

- A training provider's prior eligibility status or status of an existing program
- Accurate program cost information (including tuition & fees)
- Accurate consumer information in SDWORKS
- The availability of training services through the State
- Performance reports for the previous program year submitted within the required reporting period
- Meet minimum performance standards
- Performance accountability measures
- Ability to offer industry-recognized certificates and/or credentials
- Ability of the providers to provide training services that are physically and programmatically accessible for individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities
- The degree to which the program relates to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the State
- The ability of the training provider to provide training services to individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, incumbent workers, and individuals with barriers to employment
- Any additional information requested by DLR.

Continued Program Review Process

Providers must submit continued eligibility applications by July 31st of the biennial period. DLR Program Specialist will review the continued application to verify Continued Eligibility Application Requirements are completed. The training provider contact will be informed via email of approval or denial status, or if additional information is needed, within 45 days of submission.

REPORTING AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Program Performance

All providers must meet reporting and performance requirements for continued eligibility. Data collected in the ETP performance will be made accessible to the public via the WIOA Annual Report and shared by U.S. DOL at trainingproviderresults.gov. This information will also be distributed to job seekers throughout the WIOA system.

Training Provider Reporting Period

Each approved training provider must submit program performance reports on an annual basis, based on the Program

Year (July 1st to June 30th) to DLR for each approved program using the data template supplied by DLR. Data must be submitted no later than July 31st after the end of each program year for the 12-month period beginning July 1st of the previous year. This 12-month period is the "reporting period."

EXAMPLE: On July 31st, 2020, the training provider submits a program performance report for each of its approved programs for the reporting period beginning July 1st, 2019, ending June 30th, 2020.

Required Reporting Elements

- **Total Number of Individuals Served** – The total number of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) in the program of study in the reporting period.
- **Total Number of Individuals Exited** – The total number of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) who completed, withdrew, or transferred from this program of study in the reporting period.
- **Total Number of Individuals Completed** – The total number of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) who completed (did not withdraw or transfer out) from this program of study in the reporting period.
- **Credential Attainment Rate** – The total number of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) who completed the training program AND attained a credential associated with the program of study within one year after exit. This includes all students who attained a recognized postsecondary credential during the program or with one year after exit OR attained a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, and who were also employed or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a postsecondary credential within one year after training program exit.
- **Employment Rate 2nd and 4th Quarter After Exit** – The total number of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) from the training program who are found to be employed, either through direct UI wage record match or supplemental wage information.
- **Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit** – Total quarterly earnings, for the total number of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) who are employed in the second quarter after exit, are collected by either direct wage record match or supplemental wage information.
- **Average Earnings 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit** – Average earnings of students (WIOA and non-WIOA) in the training program who are in unsubsidized employment during the second and fourth quarters after exit. This information may be obtained through direct UI wage record match.

Reports must be based on data for all students who are enrolled in, exited, and all students who completed the program during the reporting period. For reporting guidance, refer to the SDWORKS Eligible Provider Training Manual.

Minimum Performance Requirements

Program performance is collected for DLR to evaluate program effectiveness and monitor compliance. DLR has established the minimum performance standards to meet the State's lowest negotiated performance rate of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth program established with U.S. DOL for the biennial program year. Registered Apprenticeship Programs are not required to submit performance information.

Program performance is based on all student outcomes for the Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit, Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit, Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit, and Credential Attainment Rate.

Programs that fail three out of four elements for two consecutive years must be removed from the ETPL as stated in the Conditions for Removal. Training programs with less than ten total students are exempt from the conditions of removal due to insufficient performance requirements. Providers removed for one of these reasons may reapply for initial eligibility by demonstrating compliance with all requirements under WIOA law.

PERSONAL IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION & CONFIDENTIALITY

To comply with federal reporting requirements, the collection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) (e.g., Social Security Numbers on WIOA and non-WIOA program participants) is required to derive performance outcomes such as employment and earnings. PII and other sensitive information must be protected. DLR and training providers must take the steps necessary to ensure all PII's obtained from participants and/or other individuals in the ITA invoicing process is secure to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure. All PII data must be processed in a manner that will protect the confidentiality of the records/documents and is designed to prevent unauthorized persons from retrieving

such records by computer, remote terminal, or any other means.

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) generally applies to postsecondary institutions that are eligible training providers. Most postsecondary institutions are also recipients of federal funds under a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. However, some private providers of training services may not be recipients of funds administered by the U.S. Department of Education, including Pell Grants or student loans funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Those providers would generally be excluded from FERPA requirements. Compliance with ETPL reporting requirements does not violate the privacy requirement set forth in FERPA. Per TEGL 7-16, joint guidance issued by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, the FERPA audit or evaluation exception permits PII disclosure from education records for WIOA performance accountability purposes.

CONDITIONS FOR REMOVAL §680.450(A-B)(E)(G-H)

If a training program fails to meet the minimum performance requirement for two consecutive years, it will be removed from the ETPL. Training programs with less than ten total students are exempt from the conditions of removal due to insufficient performance requirements. Providers removed for one of these reasons may reapply for initial eligibility by demonstrating compliance with all requirements under WIOA law.

An approved program will be removed from the ETPL if a training provider does not supply annual reporting and performance requirements by the date indicated in the Training Provider Reporting Period section. If a training provider supplies false performance information, misrepresent cost or services, or substantially violates requirements of WIOA law or regulations, the provider will be removed from the ETPL for a period of at least two years. Providers may be required to repay all WIOA Title I funds received during the period of non-compliance.

If a training provider or program of training services is removed from the ETPL while WIOA participants are enrolled, the participant may complete the program unless the provider or program has lost authorization to operate in South Dakota.

Appeal Process §683.630(B)

If a training provider is denied inclusion on the ETPL or terminated from eligibility, the provider has the option to appeal. A written request for appeal and a statement of justification explaining why the provider should be included on the ETPL must be submitted via email to DLRETPL@state.sd.us within 15 business days after notification ineligibility or termination. Written appeals should not exceed one page. The training provider will be contacted within 15 business days of DLR's receipt of the appeal to schedule a hearing with the ETPL Appeals Board. The appeals board consists of the current WDC. The WDC will issue a final decision within 60 business days of the date of the hearing. If denied, a program will be unable to reapply through the ETPL eligibility process for two years from the date of final notification by the ETPL Appeals Board.

4. *Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which applies to individualized career services and training services funded by the Adult Formula program.*

Priority

The WIOA Title I Adult program is statutorily required to provide priority of individualized career and training services to individuals in the following order:

Priority of Services
1. Veterans and Eligible Spouses** including Widows and Widowers + Low Income, Public Assistance, or Basic Skills Deficient
2. Low Income, Public Assistance, or Basic Skills Deficient
3. Veterans and Eligible Spouses including Widows and Widowers + Displaced Homemaker; Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians; Older individuals; Individuals with disabilities* ; Ex-Offenders* ; Homeless individuals or homeless children and youths; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, have low levels of literacy, and facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers; individuals within

two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; single parents; or long-term unemployed individuals
4. Displaced Homemaker; Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians; Older individuals; Individuals with disabilities* ; Ex-Offenders* ; Homeless individuals or homeless children and youths; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, have low levels of literacy, and facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers; individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; single parents; or long-term unemployed individuals
5. Veterans and Eligible Spouses who are NOT included in the priority group (1 or 3 above)
6. Priority established by the Governor or Workforce Development Council: High School Dropout
7. All other individuals ages 18 and older.

The priority of service will be monitored through the One-Stop Career Center certification process (See [Policy 3.3](#)) by comparing the number of applicants eligible for a priority population to those meeting a priority enrolled in the Adult program. Priority of Service is identified through South Dakota's management information system. The One-Stop Career Center certification will be focused on enrolled individuals that are veterans that meet priority of service, and non-veterans that meet priority of service.

c) Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs.

The DLR Cabinet Secretary may transfer up to 100% of a program year **allocation** between the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Determinations are based on economic needs. A larger dislocated population may need additional funding in order to assist in education or retraining. South Dakota always focuses on a priority service to adults and funding would be appropriately dispersed based on need.

d) Youth Program Requirements

(1) Identify the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants or contracts for youth workforce investment activities and describe how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for the youth program as described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA in awarding such grants or contracts.

Title I Youth

South Dakota is a single area state, and DLR, as the designated agency, is the provider of Title I Youth services. South Dakota does not award grants or contracts for youth services. Each comprehensive One-Stop Center has at least one Title I Youth-focused employment specialist(s) to provide youth-specific case management. The Job Service Office partners with local providers to offer transportation, retail, training, and healthcare providers. DLR selects providers and vendors based on participant selection and the business's willingness to cooperate with DLR's fiscal procedures and requirements.

The DLR strives to meet primary indicators of performance through a multi-faceted approach. This approach includes reviewing reports, real-time data monitoring, and scrutinizing participants' active and inactive SDWORKS files. Program Specialists offer frequent statewide support and training to field staff to ensure compliance with policy and procedure. DLR works closely with our SDWORKS vendor to capture all verifiable performance indicators for federal reporting. DLR utilizes program specialists focused on data analysis and federal reporting to help us identify trends, make predictions, and adjust service delivery to improve outcomes. DLR takes this information into account in its one-stop certification process.

(2) Describe the strategies the State will use to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B), including how it will leverage and align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available.

Out-of-School Youth (OSY)

DLR experienced our lowest participation numbers during Program Year 2020. From a near-record high participation in July 2019 (158) to our lowest in October 2020 (56). A combination of factors mainly related to the Covid-19 pandemic, including statewide office closures, resulted in a significant re-evaluation of DLR's enrollment processes and service delivery options. To respond, DLR developed new virtual platforms for enrollment and case management, trained staff on its utilization, and delivered it to the people of South Dakota. These adjustments and resources are proving successful at engaging the youth population in South Dakota. Utilizing SDWORKS reporting from December 1st, 2021, DLR can show a clear direction of program expansion. In November of 2021, DLR saw its highest OSY participation numbers since October 2019.

In the coming program years, DLR plans to continue refining and perfecting our remote access platforms and lean into the opportunities available in virtual spaces, develop and offer additional virtual training, and focus staff time on the geographic areas of highest need regardless of the staff's physical location.

Youth PREP (Participants Reaching Employment Potential)

Launched in May of 2021, Youth PREP offers participants in the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Program an enhanced service delivery model. Designed to increase the financial sustainability and resource utilization for participants seeking their GED® Credential and foster closer, more streamlined partnerships with adult education providers across South Dakota.

The approach is expected to yield an increase in OSY participants and provide a pathway for exceeding Measurable Skills Gain and Credential obtainment rates in future reporting periods. High levels of coordination between DLR and adult education providers, case management, and higher-than-normal rates of financial incentive and assistance provided to this population will result in greater levels of GED® Credential obtainments and a greater likelihood of meaningful employment.

PREP offers an enhanced financial service for housing-related costs (rent, utilities), a \$200 monthly Youth Incentive payment for meeting or exceeding education expectations recommended by adult education providers. PREP introduces a monthly monitoring system that verifies robust engagement with adult education partners and identifies potential barriers. DLR will coordinate and encourage paid work-based learning opportunities (WEX) to participants with their educational goals in mind (i.e., Scheduling around class hours, adjusting hours based on academic needs, etc.). DLR expects that Work-Based Learning in conjunction with adult education provides a more efficient track to overall career readiness and career satisfaction.

As of December 1, 2021, 36 participants have enrolled in the OSY program specifically to engage with the PREP service delivery model, many directly referred from adult education providers. These enrollments count for more than one-third of all new enrollments between May 2021 and November 2021.

Core Programs

DLR is committed to continuous improvement, and efforts are underway and ongoing to increase communication and understanding between the different core programs and other partner agencies. Emphasis on enrollment to the greatest extent possible coincides with an increased awareness of core program functions by job service office staff and knowledge of the overall vision of partner programs. Best practices are being identified and shared with job service office staff regarding support for clients co-enrolled in Title I programs and Vocational Rehabilitation, PREP partnership with Title 2 adult education providers, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) program, and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Efforts to develop policy, guidance, best practices and to educate job service office staff regarding SNAP E&T and TANF are underway to increase co-enrollment into Title I programs to readily offer intensive case management and supports to customers in pursuit of training or employment. Utilizing services from each agency expands the resources available to help participants succeed.

(3) Describe how the state will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented, including quality pre-apprenticeship programs under the work experience program element.

The continuous staff training and the creation and distribution of the South Dakota WIOA Services Chart ([Resource 1](#)), which provides service definitions and examples, have helped staff understand the **services available** to clients and the definitions of each of the 14 youth elements. Each DLR job service office is required to explain and distribute the current One-Stop Services List ([Form 3](#)) to individuals during the orientation process, a signature provides proof of receipt and review of the list. [III.b.1.2](#) The process helps ensure each individual is aware of the wide variety of services offered through the workforce systems in South Dakota. A video summarizing these services is also available on the Virtual Job Service webpage.

The Objective Assessment service helps job service office staff understand which services are needed most by a client at their application. Creating an Employment Plan with each participant creates a road map of services moving forward and

allows staff to make meaningful recommendations for services within the 14 program elements.

(4) Provide the language contained in the State policy for “requiring additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for out-of-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and for “requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). If the state does not have a policy, describe how the state will ensure that local areas will have a policy for these criteria.

WIOA Regulation §681.300 provides State Boards with the authority to define and establish documentation requirements for additional assistance. **Additional assistance** is defined as an individual who meets one or more of the following:

- No employment within the last 6 months.
- Unable to hold employment due to being fired from, or quitting, two or more jobs in the last 6 months.
- History of substance abuse.
- One or more parents are currently incarcerated.
- Is a veteran.

Documentation requirements include a case note in the participant’s SDWORKS file outlining the Additional Assistance category that applies to the participant and the participant’s situation related to the Additional Assistance (*reference WIOA [Youth Additional Assistance](#) Policy 4.4*). Participants sign the completed WIOA application adding a layer of self-attestation for validation.

(5) Include the State definition, as defined in law, for not attending school and attending school as specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(i). If State law does not define “not attending school” or “attending school,” indicate that is the case and provide the state policy for determining whether a youth is attending or not attending school.

In reference to South Dakota WIOA [Youth Eligibility](#) Policy 4.3, school status does not change through the participation period, and the definition of **attending school** includes the following:

Attending School includes: Those registered for classes, is between school terms and intends to return to school (ex. Summer months), attending secondary, secondary alternative, or post-secondary school, high school equivalency programs funded through the K-12 school system, and individuals with a disability under the age of 21 who is receiving services funded through the K-12 school system. These individuals are considered In-School.

Attending School does not include: Those who are not attending any school; homeschooled individuals; individuals attending Adult Education and Literacy under Title II of WIOA, dropout re-engagement programs, YouthBuild programs, high school equivalency programs (not funded through the K-12 school system), youth within the age of compulsory school attendance who have not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter, or enrolled in non-credit-bearing post-secondary classes. These individuals would be considered Out-of-School.

(6) If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the State definition which must further define how to determine if an individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. If not using the portion of the definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), indicate that is the case.

As outlined in South Dakota WIOA [Basic Skills Deficient](#) Policy 4.8, all participants are assessed for Basic Skills Deficiency. Determinations must be made within 60 days of the initial application. Formal assessment results within the last 6 months provided by the DLR, a partner agency, or the participant are uploaded and recorded in the participant’s SDWORKS file.

Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) means, concerning an individual

- Who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- Who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.

Exemptions to having a participant take the assessment may include any individual who has:

- Obtained an Associate’s degree or higher.

- Obtained the GOLD NCRC or above within the last five years.
- Met with their IRT team, and the recommendation is to waive the assessments based on the individual's situation (Case notes must reflect who was in attendance of IRT and why the assessment is waived).

In South Dakota, an ACT® WorkKeys® Curriculum™ Placement Quiz, WorkKeys Assessments, TABE™, National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), Best Plus™, and Best Literacy™ assessment can be utilized to determine BSD. Best Plus 2 and or Best Literacy assessments are used exclusively by English Language Learners, BSD should be selected regardless of score.

A guide for determining Basic Skills Deficient is included in WIOA Assessment Guide ([Resource 13](#)), and includes:

- **ACCUPLACER®**
 - A participant is Basic Skills Deficient if their score is less than the recommended score for post-secondary program of study.
- **ACT® WorkKeys® Curriculum™ Placement Quiz or WorkKeys® Assessment**
 - Level 4 or below in any assessment = BSD
- **NCRC**
 - Silver or Bronze = BSD
- **TABE™ 9/10**
 - Score at or below a 566 in reading, 565 in mathematics, and a 559 in language = BSD
- **TABE™ 11/12**
 - Score at or below 575 in reading, 595 in mathematics, and 583 in language = BSD
- **Best Plus™ / Best Literacy™**
 - Select BSD if presented with either test regardless of score

e) Single-area State requirements

(1) Any comments from the public comment period that represent disagreement with the Plan. (WIOA section 108(d)(3).)

Public Comment

In compliance with the Single-area State requirements, South Dakota made the Unified State Plan available on January 14 on the DLR website. The public comment period closed on February 14.

COMMENTS WILL BE POSTED HERE AFTER THE PUBLIC COMMENTS PERIOD

(2) The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).);

DLR is responsible for **disbursement of grant funds** and offers a wide variety of services to participants statewide.

(3) A description of the type and availability of WIOA title I Youth activities and successful models, including for youth with disabilities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)

At intake, **activities** with all Title I applicants beginning with the completion of an eligibility determination activity. Next, the Objective Assessment allows staff provides an overall view of the individual, and helps determine strengths and weaknesses, physical, emotional, financial, and educational needs. The completion of the Objective Assessment flows naturally into the creation of the Employment Plan. When feasible all agencies providing services to a single customer are encouraged to develop a joint Employment Plan. The Employment Plan helps staff and participants to identify major career goals as well as identifying steps along the way. Staff are encouraged to update the Employment Plan frequently to help participants track their progress and adjust goals and objectives as needed. Services are available to eligible youth, including those with disabilities. Our goal is to meet youth where they are and use the Employment Plan to move them along their educational and career pathway. Other activities include:

Post-secondary Preparation and Transition Service – Includes completing financial aid forms, assistance in applying to post-secondary institutions, coordinating remedial course work necessary to attend post-secondary straining, coordinating meaningful meetings between the client and post-secondary representatives, learning about necessary

life skills to be successful in post-secondary environments. Participants with disabilities are assisted with resource coordination from training providers, the community, and partner programs specific to their individual needs. Post-secondary preparation and transition services have become increasingly popular as students, educators, and guardians are increasingly aware of the negative financial, emotional, and educational outcomes that occur when students attend post-secondary training without a clear view of expectations and a defined plan for completion. The Career Launch SD program is an example of the commitment to providing meaningful transition services to students at the secondary level. Through increased school engagement, DLR has reached hundreds of high school students offering career exploration, industry engagement, business tours, employer presentations, and soft skills training; and spread the message of Title I services which as lead to increased participation.

Educational Achievement – Recorded when a participant takes part in active tutoring or study skills training in either the secondary or post-secondary environment.

Leadership Development Services – Designed to encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors. This activity is entered when a participant is enriched through Job Search Assistance Program (JSAP) training, group youth activities, mock interviews, community service projects, driver's education, voter's registration, soft skills training, and more.

Adult Mentoring – Coordinated formal relationships between mentors and Title I Youth participants in which a participant's competence and character is enriched through the guidance, encouragement, and support of the mentor.

Alternative Secondary School – Offered to participants who, for one reason or another, have dropped out of school and have made the decision to enroll in GED earning alternative education programs. Participants with disabilities can utilize support services and other case management resources to support successful completion of this service.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling – Used when referrals are made to quality providers for employment related issues, such as drug and alcohol counseling, mental health needs, behavior management etc. This service can be used as the primary service when assisting a client financially to receive needed counseling services

Education concurrent with Workforce Preparation – Integrated education and training offered concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway. This is when a participant is active in an education service, while also in a Work Experience or OJT. Similar to a Registered Apprenticeship or Pre-apprenticeship. Both services are entered, and staff can enter the education service and workforce preparation service as well.

Provision of Labor Market Information – Provides specific labor market information about industry sectors and occupations available based on a participant's interest to increase career awareness.

Youth incentives – Financial incentives to complete short-term educational or employment related goals in accordance the IEP. Youth incentives are not a stand-alone activity or service, they are simply a method for payment. The service the participant did to earn the incentive is the service.

Financial Literacy – Typically offered through a partnership with a local provider or financial institution. The class covers budgeting and maintaining a checking account, as well as credit, interest rates, and other borrowing related material.

Occupational Skills Training – Organized program of study on the ETPL that provides specific vocational skills that lead to an occupational skills certificate or credential.

On-The-Job Training (OJT) – Meaningful training to a participant on a path to regular full-time employment with an employer. Used to participants penetrate industries risk averse to hiring employees new to the vocation by allowing a subsidy for an agreed upon training period.

Entrepreneurial Training – Provides the basic skills of starting and operating a small business. This service is dual entered. Entrepreneurial training will be provided through non-credentialed training or occupational skills training.

Enrolled in Secondary Education – A service entered with a participant is enrolled in a secondary education program at 9th grade level or above. Participants with disabilities can utilize support services and other case management resources to support successful completion of this service.

Non-Occupational Skills Training – Training that assists a participant in acquiring technical or occupational skills towards his/her career pathway but does not meet one of the specific trainings or lead to a credential.

Work Experience – Generally a partnership with local employers, a paid or unpaid training experience that gives youth participants hands on experience in a field they are interested in pursuing or provides them with other valuable employability enhancing skills through actual work experience.

Pre-apprenticeship programs – Coordination between educational institutions, primarily secondary schools, and local business and industry. This service provides monitored work experience and education that aids in the earning of educational and or working hours that lead towards the completion of a Registered Apprenticeship program. Expanding apprenticeship opportunities for participants with disabilities is part of our overall apprenticeship strategy.

Job Shadowing – Allows youth participants to earn a stipend while spending time on a work site with professionals in an industry of interest to the participant. A function of a Work Experience.

Support Services – Services to active Title I participants and Title I Youth participants in Follow Up status to aide in starting or maintaining participation in workforce training or employment retention. Services offered include assistance with child/dependent care, transportation, medical needs, housing, work attire, educational testing, necessary workplace or training/job seeking accommodations, books/supplies/fees required for education and training, fees associated with applications and tests, with an “other” service reserved for participant needs that do not fall under the other categories.

(4) A description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners

South Dakota Agency	Program Role	Resources
DLR	WIOA Title I Adult	Individualized, Training, Support, and Follow Up Services, Employer Services
	WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker	Individualized, Training, Support, and Follow Up Services, Employer Services
	WIOA Title I Youth	Youth Services and Employer Services
	WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services	Basic Career Services, Coordinated Referrals to partner programs, and Employer Services
	Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Job Search Allowance, Relocation Assistance, Transportation and Subsistence Assistance while in Training, Training Services, Readjustment Allowance, and Reemployment Assistance
	Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)	Career readiness services for Veterans and Employer Services
	Reemployment Assistance Benefits (RA)	Provides financial benefit to individuals who have lost their jobs due to no fault of their own

	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Eligibility Review for Reemployment Assistance Benefits and Coordination with other workforce programs
	Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program (MSFW)	
Black Hills Special Services Cooperative	National Farmworker Jobs Programs (NFJP)	Provides education, training and employment, and support services
U.S. Forest System	Job Corps	Offers secondary education, post-secondary workforce training programs, and transition services to improve employment outcomes and self-sufficiency
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Sioux Tribe, & Yankton Sioux Tribe	Native American Programs	Employment and training activities to make individuals more competitive, and promote social and economic development
DLR	WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)	Basic skill assessments, literacy and numeracy, high school equivalency preparation, family literacy, integrated education and training, English Language Acquisition, Integrated English Literacy and Civics
Department of Human Services (DHS)	WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)	Career planning, vocational counseling, situational assessments, work-based and training services, assistive technology, transition services, benefits specialists, disability specific, and employment services
DOE	Career and Technical Education Program (CTE)	Educational and training programs that provide opportunities to help students prepare for work
DSS	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Provides temporary financial assistance and employment and training services to improve economic self-sufficiency
	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program	Financial assistance for food to help individual meet basic dietary needs while they regain financial independence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLR • National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA) 	Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Part-time work experiences and training opportunities to enhance self-sufficiency

(5) The competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts for title I activities.

DLR One-Stop Career Centers provide the majority of Title I services. Other services, such as driver's education or counseling, are delivered by local providers using establish a partnerships and payment through the DLR fiscal processes. When a competitive process is needed, the state procurement law is used. This regulation can be found at sdlegislature.gov/Statutes/Codified_Laws/DisplayStatute.aspx?Type=Statute&Statute=5-18A.

(6) How training services outlined in section 134 will be provided through individual training accounts and/or through contracts, and how such training approaches will be coordinated. Describe how the State will meet informed customer choice requirements regardless of training approach.

DLR staff assist participants in determining the training to meets their need and employment goals. Based on guidance from DLR staff and eligibility, the participant can select a program of study from those identified on the Eligible Training Provider List. After enrollment, assessments, and Employment Plan are complete, a determination is made regarding the participant's eligibility for training services:

- The participant is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services (Title I Adults and Dislocated Workers);
- The participant is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment (Title I Adults and Dislocated Workers); and
 - The participant has the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services.

- The training will assist the individual in obtaining employment upon completion of the training.
- The individual is eligible for funding through the WIOA Title I program.
- The participant has an unmet need based on their Financial Aid Award Letter.
- The participant has been accepted to the program of study.
- The program of study is on the ETPL. If eligible for training assistance, an Individual Training Account is created specifically for the participant, the program of study, and the training provider.
- The DLR then works with the training provider to issue payment by the DLR Administrative Services Division

(7) How the State Board, in fulfilling Local Board functions, will coordinate title I activities with those activities under title II. Describe how the State Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

South Dakota's State Board, the WDC, will coordinate Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth activities with those activities under Title II through policy guidance, One Stop Operator selection, One Stop Certification, and through the Memorandum of Understanding of the One Stop Center. The WDC has embraced the DLR philosophy of enrollment to the greatest extent possible to offer students increased access to services, which allows for better educational and employment outcomes. When Title II students have additional supports in place to help them continue their studies, it increases their skill level leading to better and more sustainable employment outcomes. Workforce partners in South Dakota, provide Integrated Resource Team meetings where various providers, the participant in common, and the participant's natural support system meet to ensure everyone is working in unison to best assist the customer. At quarterly meetings, the WDC learns about programs and services available through the One Stop System, including hearing testimonials from participants often impacted by these programs. Through the selection of the One Stop Operator, the WDC considered ability of this provider to align and coordinate services among partners. Through the One Stop Certification process, the WDC considers both formal and informal partnerships between the various workforce programs, including Title I and Title II. Additionally, on an annual basis, the WDC reviews the federal performance of the core programs.

The WDC reviewed the allowable AEFLA activities at the Quarter 2 meeting in December 2019 for consideration prior to the 2020 grant competition. Council members in attendance were asked to rank the allowable activities. DLR Title II staff will utilize these priorities during applicant review. The Title II program will solicit at least one panelist from the WDC to review and score all local applications. Subsequently, based upon the finalized list of applicants, the WDC will have the opportunity to make recommendations to DLR for the alignment of the applicants' proposed Adult Education instruction, activities, and services with the Unified State Plan's goals and implementation.

(8) Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system, including cooperative agreements with entities administering Rehabilitation Act programs and services.

Reference Memorandum of Understanding in [Appendix 2](#).

f) Waiver Requests

South Dakota has two waiver requests:

- Out-of-School Youth Expenditure
- Individual Training Account Usage for In-School Youth

- (1) Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan
- (2) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;
- (3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;
- (4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:
 - (A) supporting employer engagement;
 - (B) connecting education and training strategies;
 - (C) supporting work-based learning;
 - (D) improving job and career results, and
 - (E) other guidance issued by the Department.
- (5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and
- (6) Describes the processes used to:
 - (A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;
 - (B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;
 - (C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;
 - (D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.
 - (E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report

Out-of-School Youth Expenditure Waiver

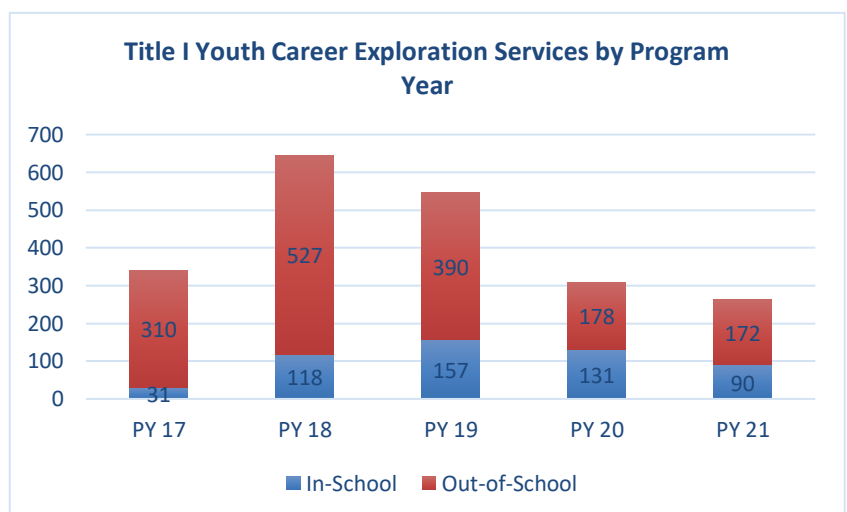
The State of South Dakota is requesting a waiver from Section 129 (a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410, which requires not less than 75% of funds allotted to states under Section 127(b)(1)(C), reserved under Section 128(a), shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for Out-of-School Youth. South Dakota is requesting a waiver to reduce the 75% funding requirement for out-of-school youth to 50%. Engagement with in-school youth has improved DLR's recruitment into the WIOA Title I program, resulting in stronger performance outcomes, specifically in Measurable Skills Gains and Credential Attainment. Engagement with students while they are In-School allows us to serve a population who is low-income and typically have multiple barriers to employment. Rather than waiting until these youth are adults, engaging them while young allows for positive work behaviors to form, provides meaning and application to their secondary and post-secondary studies, and assists in meeting employer's workforce needs.

There is not a state or local statutory or regulatory barrier to implement the requested waiver. State of South Dakota regulations and policy statements are in compliance with current federal law.

Goal: Increase Career Exploration services to youth regardless of their educational status.

Outcome: This waiver allows DLR to expend up to 50% of youth funding on In-School Youth. With this waiver in place, DLR has improved partnerships with the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) and school districts throughout the state. DLR has regional Career Advisors that work with students in schools and with area businesses to increase career exploration opportunities for students, including youth eligible for the WIOA Title I program. Exposure to various employment opportunities and awareness of business needs, allows students to make informed decisions about their education and career pathway.

Career Exploration services include Job Shadows, Provision of Labor Market Information, and Leadership Development Services. This waiver contributed to the 89% increase in Career Exploration services provided to youth



participants from Program Year 2017 to Program Year 2018. A notable decrease happened in Program Year 2019 and again in Program Year 2020. This decrease is likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the reassignment of job service staff to the Reemployment Assistance Division from March through November of 2020. Staff who assist youth in the Job Services Offices worked quickly to re-engage with schools and other partners resulting in an upward trend in services provided in the first half of Program Year 2021. We are confident these numbers will continue to rise with the opportunities that come with this waiver.

Goal: Increase work-based learning services to youth despite their education status. This includes work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training and job shadows.

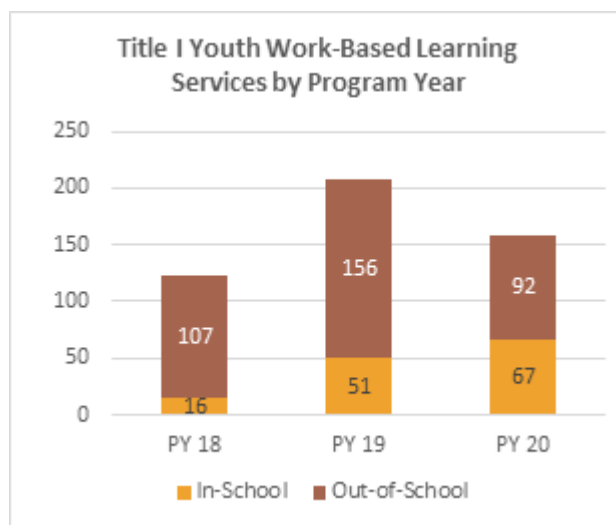
Outcome: South Dakota’s low unemployment numbers have businesses increasingly interested in building relationships with students. This waiver allows DLR to offer services to all youth participants equally, resulting in a sizable increase in the number of Work-Based Learning Services provided in South Dakota communities. These opportunities include work experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and job shadows. DLR offered 16 work-based learning services to In-School Youth in Program Year 2018. In Program Year 2019, this increased by 218% to 51 work-based learning opportunities provided to In-School Youth. Despite pandemic-related decreases in enrollment numbers in Program Year 2020, 67 participants received a work-based learning service during this time. Since the implementation of this waiver, DLR has been able to meet the requirement established in WIOA §129(c)(4) that 20% of funds must be used to provide In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth participants work-based learning services.

Through a partnership with the Department of Education (DOE), DLR has regional Career Advisors working with students in schools. For youth who are eligible for the Title I Youth Program, DLR provides all youth elements including opportunities for paid work-based learning opportunities.

Goal: Enhance partnerships with schools and businesses to increase youth apprenticeship opportunities.

Outcome: Approval of this waiver has allowed DLR to develop meaningful connections between students, school districts, and businesses by offering job shadows, work experiences, internships, and on-the-job training. These discussions have allowed staff to become more familiar with possible apprenticeship opportunities and working with businesses to formalize these trainings into Registered Apprenticeship programs. Approval of this waiver assists DLR in the promotion of apprenticeship as a viable post-secondary option for students to explore.

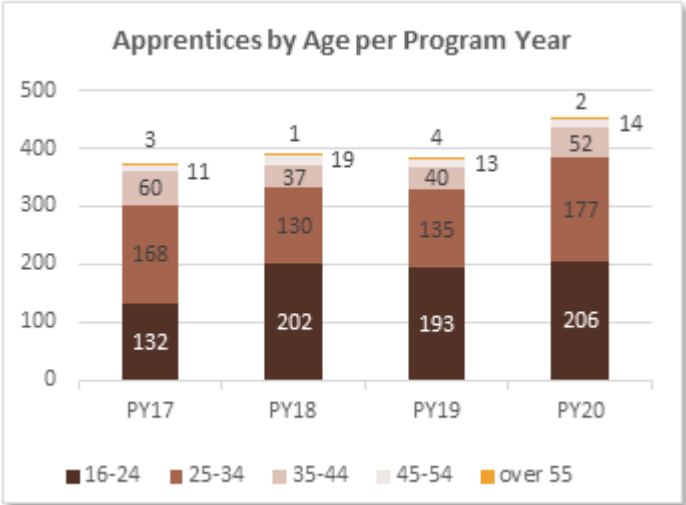
As depicted in the chart below, the number and diversification of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in SD continues to grow. This waiver has provided increased opportunities for DLR staff to form community coalitions and build partnerships between businesses and schools.



	FY17/PY16	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
i. Total number of Registered Apprenticeship programs in South Dakota	103	171	178	191	219
ii. Registered Apprenticeship Occupational Diversity - Number of different occupations available through the Registered Apprenticeship program.	38	40	47	47	62
iii. Number of individuals who enter a Registered Apprenticeship Program.	314	478	443	447	484

There are three Pathway Partnership programs taking place throughout the state. These programs directly link students to the industry while receiving both high school and post-secondary credit. These opportunities allow students to experience an occupation, learn more about a local employer, earn a paycheck, and secondary, post-secondary and Registered Apprenticeship credit. The Figure “Apprentice by Age per Program Year” illustrates new apprentices by age. Apprentices in South Dakota are primarily between the ages of 16 and 24. The Pathway Partnership program engaged 40 youth apprentices throughout the state.

Monitor: DLR will monitor this waiver through the One Stop Certification process and Annual Narrative Report. DLR’s SDWORKS management information system allows for detailed reports to be pulled to monitor progress on program performance and goals identified in this waiver. During the One Stop Center Certification process, the Job Service Office’s performance regarding these waivers is taken into account.



State Board Notification: South Dakota is a single-area state. The Workforce Development Council is made aware of these waivers when receiving annual report updates, during the state plan approval process, and through the public comment process.

Individual Training Account Usage for In-School Youth Waiver

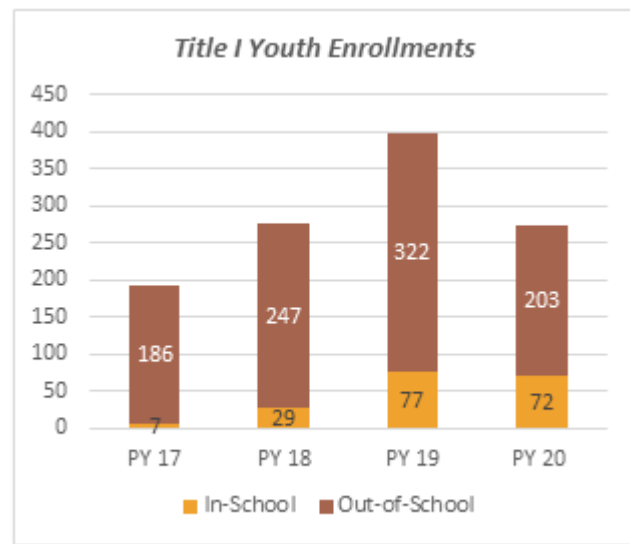
The State of South Dakota is requesting a waiver from 20 CFR 681.550 that allows WIOA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for Title I Out-of-School Youth between the ages of 14 and 21. South Dakota is requesting a waiver to allow the state to provide Title I In-School Youth with WIOA ITAs. In addition to improving partnerships and increasing Youth Program participation, this waiver allows DLR to operate our in-school youth program in alignment with our out-of-school youth program. This eases implementation for a small state like South Dakota, where the same staff work multiple workforce programs.

There are no state or local statutory or regulator barriers to implementing the request waiver.

Goal: Increase enrollment in South Dakota’s WIOA Title I Youth program.

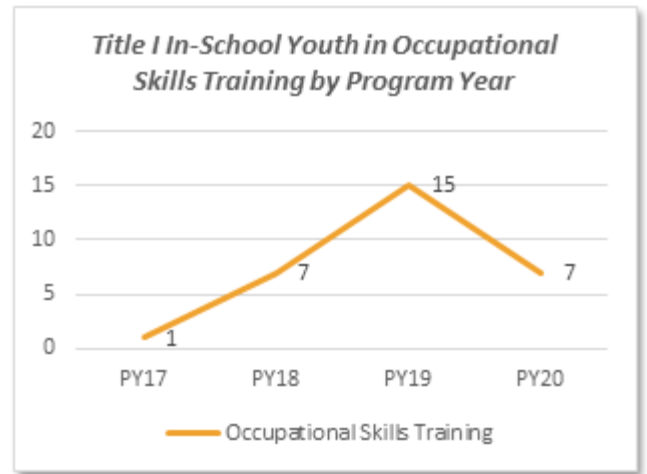
Outcome: Approval of this waiver has allowed job service office staff to enroll Title I Youth regardless of their post-secondary goals. Previously, staff would pre-determine if an individual would best be served as an In-School Youth and be unable to assist them with an ITA or be forced to wait until they are an Out-of-School Youth

and potentially lose them during the waiting period. As noted in the Figure “Title I Youth Enrollments,” enrollments in the WIOA Title I Youth program saw a decrease due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, initial PY21 numbers are strong and provide optimism for additional growth in the South Dakota WIOA Title I Youth Program.



Goal: Increase post-secondary options to disadvantaged In-School Youth.

Outcome: Approval of this waiver allowed DLR to assist individuals with an ITA even if they come to as an In-School Youth. This waiver provides opportunities to engage more participants in training opportunities. Since the implementation of this waiver, DLR had a 1400% increase in Occupational Skills Trainings offered to in-school youth from PY17 to PY19 (see Figure: “Title I In-School Youth in Occupational Skill Training by Program Year”). Providing 15 disadvantaged in-school youth in our state with post-secondary opportunities can make a significant impact in one year. Many of these students were served through the Career Launch SD partnership between DLR and the South Dakota Department of Education. Assisting In-School Youth with career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, and exposure to a variety of post-secondary offerings increases awareness for youth participants. Through holistic case management, post-secondary transition and preparation, financial literacy, and tutoring through educational achievement, DLR expects to see continued utilization of Title I Youth funding to assist students in reaching their training and career goals.



Many factors contributed to the increase in Title I Youth enrollments from Program Year 2017 to Program Year 2018, the ability to provide ITAs to In-school Youth increased the value of DLR in the eyes of training providers, employers, secondary and post-secondary institutions. Stronger partnerships have led to more referrals especially for Title I Youth participants in secondary school as demonstrated by the 229% increase in In-school Youth participants and 40.8% overall increase in Title I Youth participants overall.

We anticipate continued growth in our ISY participant base as we move to supporting South Dakota’s schools using a regional model. Training is being conducted that will assist Career Advisors in identifying and enrolling individuals who are eligible and seeking Title 1 services. We are anticipating an increase in participation numbers of around 30% by the end of PY 2021.

Monitor: DLR will monitor this waiver through the One Stop Certification process and Annual Narrative Report. DLR’s SDWORKS management information system allows for detailed reports to be pulled to monitor progress on program performance and goals identified in this waiver. During the One Stop Center Certification process, the Job Service Office’s performance regarding these waivers is taken into account.

State Board Notification: South Dakota is a single-area state. The Workforce Development Council is made aware of these waivers when receiving annual report updates, during the state plan approval process, and through the public comment process.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;
2.	The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;
3.	The State has established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;
4.	The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);
5.	Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;
6.	The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;
7.	The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7);
8.	The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;
9.	If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner- Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;
10.	The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved in its WIOA Annual Report.
11.	The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA184(a)(3);

WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM

(a) Employment Service Professional Staff Development.

(1) Describe how the state will staff the provision of labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, such as through state employees, including but not limited to state merit staff employees, staff of a subrecipient, or some combination thereof.

South Dakota will continue to utilize state merit staff employees.

(2) Describe how the State will utilize professional development activities for Employment Service staff to ensure staff is able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

Through policy and procedures, DLR staff have resources at their fingertips to guide them as they serve customers. Updates to these are released through a Policy Memo process. Program leaders then hold two calls with Job Service Office staff statewide to review the changes.

Through the pandemic, DLR saw a significant turnover in Job Service staff. As a result, program leadership increased the use of Microsoft Teams to provide virtual training to all staff throughout the state. These trainings are typically recorded and offered for future viewing.

Staff also have opportunities to attend in-person or virtual professional development trainings through other organizations and DLR. For the first time ever, DLR is offering a DLR Workforce Conference to all Job Service Office staff throughout the state. This conference will offer staff to learn of a variety of topics, such as the Native American culture in the workplace, trauma informed practices, and serving those in poverty. In future years, plans are to include workforce partners.

The Director of Workforce Development and Workforce Services meet individually with all new staff to ensure they have the technology needs to virtually connect with customers. These meetings offer an opportunity for relationship building and encouragement to improve and expand DLR's services. Through the use of technology, program leadership has developed statewide training groups made up of various staff through the Job Service Offices. These groups engage staff, utilize their expertise, and expand on their knowledge. This has been an effective training model, DLR hopes to expand upon. Current groups include:

- **The Enrollment Team:** comprised of up to 12 staff from across the state, rotates every few months depending on the number of referrals. The team is led by two statewide Lead Employment Specialists and handles virtual enrollments into Title III and Title I, as well as all workforce programs offered by DLR. The duration of time spent on the team varies based on the need of the staff member. Each Enrollment Team member receives training, support, and timely feedback on enrollment files.
- **Virtual Workshops:** The Virtual Job Service allows anyone enrolled in Title III Wagner-Peyser to register for any of the three modules, held virtually on Wednesday afternoons. Job Search Workshop is offered by four instructors located in different offices throughout the state. Instead of multiple DLR staff offering the same workshop across the state, a smaller team can offer the same curriculum more often. The instructors change twice per calendar year offering staff an opportunity to focus and improve their virtual delivery styles during their time on the workshop team. Modules are broken into shorter sessions, allowing customers to choose from the following topics: Resume, Cover Letter and Application; Assessments and Job Search; and Interview and Job Retention. DLR has plans to expand virtual workshop offerings in the future.
- **Business Engagement and Services Team (BEST):** The BEST is comprised of business engagement staff from Job Service Offices through the state. The BEST provides job service office staff with a platform to share resources, understand programs, build relationship, and assists in creating a unified message for DLR. BEST members will gain a greater understanding of the business approach to workforce programs and learn to put the needs of the business at the center of conversations. BEST will develop and utilize the process of a customer-centered approach and create outreach and relationship-building resources to launch to all job service office staff statewide.
- **Review Team:** Quarterly DLR brings together at least one Employment Specialist from each local office and Labor Program Specialists to complete data validation and active file reviews. Employment Specialists are assigned to the Review Team for two quarters at a time, allowing more Employment Specialists to participate. Labor Program Specialists train Employment Specialists to properly complete data validation checklists and what to look for when conducting an active file review. Review Team allows Labor Program Specialist to provide hands-on training to Employment Specialist that can then share their newfound knowledge on the importance of data validation

documentation and how to find and catch issues on active files with others in their local office.

DLR will continue to look for ways to improve staff understanding and creativity within their positions. It is imperative to give DLR staff the tools and guidance to successfully deliver services as they work primarily with job seekers dealing with barriers to employment and employers looking to retain skilled workers in a state with a low unemployment rate.

- (3) Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of UI eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication.*

All claimants referred by the Reemployment Assistance Division for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) are enrolled into the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program. To increase awareness across all programs, each person receives and reviews all services available to them under the One-Stop System using the One-Stop Service List ([Form 3](#)) in accordance with the Intake and Orientation [Policy 5.5](#). [III.b\) 2](#) If a Reemployment Assistance (RA) claimant does not qualify for an exemption for Re-employment Services (RES) activities, the claimant must be enrolled in at least one WIOA Title I program and complete an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) in SDWORKS.

The RA Division has provided online training to all DLR staff which reviews eligibility criteria. A recording of this training is available to all staff on the DLR Intranet. RA staff and RESEA program leadership offer joint virtual training for all staff to review policy and procedural updates. To supplement the online training and RES [Policy 5.60](#), a RES Data Entry Guide was created to address specific RES policies and procedures in SDWORKS. As a result of training and resource, staff are able to identify eligibility, exemptions, and exceptions, and help individuals with job search requirements and employment goals.

- (b) Explain how the State will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through one-stop centers, as required by WIOA as a career service.*

The RA Division, organized within DLR, is providing an open line of communication and resources to assist individuals to file an RA claim or those who are already claimants. Individuals entering any DLR job service office across the state with recent job loss will be referred to the RA Division to start the claim process and determine eligibility for RA benefits. Job service office staff help connect individuals to the RA Division to provide guidance through the filing process.

- (c) Describe the State's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals.*

Individuals referred to RES, are contacted by mail after their first payment to schedule an appointment with a job service office or the Virtual Job Service. During the first visit, an individual is enrolled into Wagner-Peyser Title III after an SDWORKS account is created. As time allows, all aspects of the initial meeting take place, including the development of an Employment Plan, review of labor market information, and enrollment into WIOA Title I. Individuals who do not meet an exemption are enrolled into Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

- (d) Describe how the State will use W-P funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between W-P and UI, as appropriate including the following:*

- (1) Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act;*
- (2) Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;*
- (3) Administration of the work test for the State unemployment compensation system, including making eligibility assessments (for referral to UI adjudication, if needed), and providing job finding and placement services for UI claimants;*
- (4) Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.*

As previously mentioned, all "Status 3 – C claimants" are referred to DLR One-Stop Career Centers if they are eligible to receive RA benefits. The RES program works with Wagner-Peyser Title III to provide claimants with appropriate provisions of intense career services. At the very beginning of the RES process, all RA claimants must attend an initial meeting and complete the RES Eligibility ([Form 60](#) or in SDWORKS). Claimants who are not exempt from RES activities are required to have weekly contact with their employment specialists and make contact with a minimum of two employers each week. To assist with the job search component, claimants have access to search for jobs on SDWORKS, which is paid for through Wagner-Peyser Title III program funds.

Along the way to securing future employment, Title III will fund career development through job search workshops, resume developments, referrals to specific employers, and any other basic career services to complete objectives in the

Employment Plan. If they do not qualify for an exemption, claimants will be expected to enroll into at least one Title I program (Adult, Dislocated, or Youth) for intensive case management, individualize career services, training services, and support services. The Employment is monitored and updated at least monthly.

*(e) **Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP).** Each State agency must develop an AOP every four years as part of the Unified or Combined State Plan required under sections 102 or 103 of WIOA. The AOP must include—Assessment of Need. Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.*

- 1) *Assessment of Need. Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing*

Based on agricultural employer activity in PY2018 (last fully completed program year at the writing of this AOP) in DLR Local Offices, agricultural employers placed 369 seasonal job orders. Of those job orders, 132 were H2A related (anticipated to be filled with requested foreign workers, but recruitment is made for US Domestic workers). H2A is primarily used in lieu of year-round workers to help fill peak load need of the farmer or rancher. Most H2A workers in the state are requested for planting (normally late April and May) and for harvest needs (normally October and November).

Otherwise, most agricultural employers who can attract and maintain year-round farm help, particularly those engaged in both crop and livestock production, will do so since these activities are year-round. However, past years have seen ag producers' concerns, and the reason for needing to use foreign workers, was lack of interest shown by individuals of staying with an ag job, individuals no longer wanting to live in a rural area of the state, and higher paying job opportunities with benefits outside the more rural areas in South Dakota.

The high percentage of H2A applications through the Foreign Labor Certification program administered by DLR and ETA in South Dakota, reflects the changes caused by the growing diversity of South Dakota's economy, mobility of individuals, interest in agriculture by individuals, and an aging ag producer population. DLR remains committed to providing opportunities to both agriculture producers needing permanent employees and individuals looking for a career in agriculture. For those individuals who are identified as migrant or seasonal employees, DLR will assist these individuals by promoting training either through WIOA Title I or WIOA 167 Farmworker Jobs Training Program (FJTP). Activities and partnerships will be discussed later in this AOP.

South Dakota has a relatively low number of Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), estimated to be approximately 200-250 statewide. Lack of labor-intensive row crops seen in high-count MSFW states has an effect on the numbers. Those identified by either DLR AJC offices or the WIOA 167 providers are primarily seasonal workers rather than migrating individuals or families. Employment for these individuals can be limited by a number of factors including; willingness to move away from rural areas with limited high-income earning jobs, education and skill levels, job experience, and overall situational circumstances of the individual or their family, if present. While assistance to eligible individuals is available through various organizations and programs, challenges remain. Employment is available, but often, this requires the individual to move to higher-population areas. Housing is a factor. Affordable and practical housing is available in the higher-population density areas of South Dakota, but is scarce when an MSFW and their families are desiring to remain in a remote or rural area. Availability, quality, and modern safety features found in most newer dwellings are sometimes limited in rural areas.

Individuals willing to move from a rural area to receive training at a technical school or college have opportunities whether but often require assistance to do so. This is being found through the WIOA 167 provider and post-secondary education financial aid. Multiple training opportunities exist as well as training programs, but those being delivered is dependent on the individuals ability to move away from the rural areas to higher population centers.

- 2) *An assessment of the agricultural activity in the State means: 1) identifying the top five labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity; 2) Summarize the agricultural employers' needs in the State (i.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce); and 3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State.*

South Dakota has long been regarded as one of the most agriculturally centric states in the country. It is the top industry

in South Dakota since statehood in 1889. The 2019 South Dakota Agriculture Economic Contribution Study (SDAECS) prepared for by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture (SDDA) Decision Innovation Solutions provides the primary content and context of Section (1)(A). sdda.sd.gov/office-of-the-secretary/publications/pdf/2019_FinalSD_AECS.pdf

Key Findings

In 2019, agriculture and related industries in South Dakota are estimated to contribute:

- \$11.2 billion in total value-added
- 132,105 jobs -This represents 22% of total South Dakota jobs and increased from 115,651 in 2014.
- \$32.5 billion in output (sales) - This represents nearly 33% of total South Dakota sales and increased from \$25.6 billion in 2014
- \$6.4 billion in labor income
- \$496.75 million in state and local taxes
- \$1.25 billion in federal taxes from the \$11.2 billion in added value and 132,105 jobs from the agriculture industry and related economic activity
- Crop production and related industries contributed \$3.4 billion in value-added and 33,617 jobs
- Livestock production and related industries contributed: \$5.8 billion in value-added 75,516 jobs
- Other agriculture contributed: \$2 billion in value-added and 22,972 jobs

Of the industries studied, the following are the top three contributors of value-added to the State of South Dakota:

- Animal slaughter (except poultry): \$1.9 billion in value-added
- Oilseed farming: \$1.8 billion in value-added
- Beef cattle ranching and farming: nearly \$1.8 billion in value-added

There are approximately 30,000 farms in South Dakota, and 83% are family-owned and operated. There are 48,913 total producers in South Dakota and 63% of the principal producers are age 55 and older, with only 1% under age 25, 8% between the ages of 25 and 34, 12% from 35 to 44 years, and 17% from 45 to 54 years. Of the 39,136 principal producers in South Dakota, about 56% of them consider farming their primary occupation, while the other 44% have another job as their primary occupation.

Agricultural Activity by the Numbers

South Dakota continually ranks in the top 15 states agriculturally. In the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the state's top rankings in agriculture were:

The South Dakota agriculture industry has the ability to produce a diverse mix of crops and livestock. In addition to ranking #1 in the U.S. for bison inventory and sunflower production, according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, South Dakota is currently ranked in the top 15 nationally for many other categories including:

- Proso millet (#3)
- Honey production (#3)
- Oat production (#4)
- Beef cow inventory (#5)
- Flaxseed production (#5)
- Spring wheat (excluding durum) production (#5)
- Sorghum production (#6)
- Cattle and calf sales (#7)
- Other animals and animal products sales (#7)
- Grains, oilseeds, dry beans & dry peas sales (#8)
- Sheep, goats, wool, mohair, milk sales (#8)
- Hay & haylage production – tons, dry basis (#11)
- Hog and pig sales (#12)
- Total Sales (#12)

The list of the top crops/animal production are not considered labor intensive in terms of manual labor and thus a heavy need of Migrant or Seasonal farmworkers. South Dakota has few, if any, large-production crops that require field labor

for planting and harvesting such as onions, lettuce, spinach, radishes, and other hand-planted and harvested fruits and vegetables.

Of the crops and livestock listed, South Dakota is physically and agriculturally separated by the Missouri River. South Dakota, to its inhabitants, is often referred to as East River and West River. East River ag production is generally smaller farms and ranches with more crop production than livestock, while West River ag production is the opposite – large ranches and large-animal production with much smaller crop production (except for hay) than one would see East River.

Agriculture is an industry of great risk. Economic, natural, and demographic shift all contribute to this risk.

- Economics – ag economics is directly tied to the socio-political environment of the United States. Contributing economic factors of the last few years has been trade agreements, tariffs on agricultural commodities and livestock, interest rates, raw material for production of ag equipment and chemicals, superpowers' influence over various regions of the world, wars, and even supply and demand weigh into the determinative factors affecting economic uncertainty in the ag industry.
- Natural factors affecting Agriculture – the impact of natural environment surrounding agriculture in South Dakota is diverse. An oft said quote is made in South Dakota that rings true; “If you don’t like the weather, stick around for a minute or two.” This simply means the weather changes so quickly with so much variation from day to day, it becomes difficult to predict to what may occur next and how that next occurrence of the weather will contribute to the overall climate and conditions found in the state. If you can name it, South Dakota has it. From blistering heat in the summer to polar winters and everything in-between. South Dakota is considered to have a continental climate with four distinct seasons and a semi-arid climate with average rainfall being 16-20 inches of precipitation per year. Since 2011, South Dakota has seen much higher rain and snowfall amounts that have contributed to widespread flooding in 2011 to localized spring flooding of rivers and streams each year. This is relatively odd to have surplus moisture for so long since the usual natural disaster affecting South Dakota and its agriculture is drought. Other factors affecting agriculture in the state can be severe thunderstorm winds and hail that destroy crops, insects that cause damage to crops, to livestock diseases such as bird flu that can cause the need to destroy large amounts of food-birds such as chickens and turkey.

3) *An assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers means summarizing Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) characteristics (including if they are predominantly from certain countries, what language(s) they speak, the approximate number of MSFWs in the State during peak season and during low season, and whether they tend to be migrant, seasonal, or year-round farmworkers). This information must take into account data supplied by WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program(NFJP) grantees, other MSFW organizations, employer organizations, and State and/or Federal agency data sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration.*

The migrant populations, particularly those that meet the definition of MSFW under Section 167, have been in livestock and poultry processing, hog farming and confinement, small grain harvest, and more recently in the northeastern area of the state, dairy farms. Large nurseries in the east-central and southeastern side of the state have attracted some migrants. BHSSC does reach out to these individuals, advises them of WIOA 167 services, as well as DLR services.

The most recent sample of BHSSC NFJP participants illustrated the average income at enrollment for an individual is approximately \$8,500.00 per year. Eighty-five percent of the participants are male and over 90% are seasonal farm and ranch workers. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers that meet case managers are from Mexico, Guatemala and Puerto Rico. The predominant language is Latin America Spanish.

The most common barriers to employment to MSFWs, cited by BHSSC outreach workers (case managers), towards gains in substantial employment are:

- Lack of technical or marketable skills;
- Limited education levels;
- Limited work experience outside of agriculture;
- Limited English proficiency;
- Limited personal and financial resources; and
- Access to needed employment, training, and family services.

The overall goals and objectives of the BHSSC NFJP include serving at least 275 eligible farm workers per year. Through effective education and training strategies, including optimum job placements based on the utilization of current Labor Market Information supplied by DLR, On-the-Job training (OJT), and formal education at the State's Technical Institutes, the BHSSC NFJP has consistently met federally prescribed performance standards. The most recent data for performance includes 70.7% Entered Employment Rate (Q2), 59.8% for Employment Retention (Q4), and Median Earnings of at least \$7,084, and Credential Attainment of 78.9%.

The number of MSFW workers traveling to or passing through South Dakota each year continues to remain relatively steady.

4) ***Outreach Activities.** The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:*

A. *Contacting farm workers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices.*

Outreach with MSFWs is done primarily through an MOU with the NFJP provider, Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC). BHSSC schedules appointments, accepts walk-in traffic, and can provide in-person visitation to another pre-arranged location near the MSFW's home or field location. BHSSC can provide a full-range of services and referral assistance to individuals whether DLR or other support agency. DLR can also do the same with any MSFW seen or referred to a local office.

BHSSC is an integral part of South Dakota's Workforce Development System. This is evident through the MOUs mentioned earlier in this section, as well as a cooperating and co-located partner with DLR.

Through its outreach efforts, BHSSC has seen technology advancements in agriculture – whether from machinery, ag chemicals, and farm modernization – as a major impact on migrant workers.

Outreach is conducted primarily by BHSSC staff visiting with locally known sites that normally utilize MSFWs, H2A workers, or large agricultural facilities, including year-round food processing plants or the areas in which these larger populations are found. However, this does not mean the state is not involved in these efforts.

Agency outreach regarding participant services that can assist individuals in the AJCs occurs through social media, local office manager and staff meeting with civic groups and local government leaders. DLR maintains close ties with the BHSSC WIOA 167 provider, particularly through the State Monitor Advocate (SMA). A strong MOU is maintained between the provider and the state to include minimum quarterly contact meetings between the SMA and outreach workers, provider administrators, and other staff. The SMA also assists local AJC staff with questions pertaining to MSFW registrants within SDWORKS, H2A questions and processes, and complaint procedures within the AJCs.

Outreach is further conducted by AJCs during normal program work and training, discussions with civic groups, travel to rural itinerary offices where posters and information is provided at town halls, laundromats, gathering sites. Information can be specific to MSFWs to general services provided by SDDLRL.

B. *Providing technical assistance to outreach workers. Technical assistance must include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referral to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the employment service complaint system, information on the other organizations serving MSFWs in the area, and a basic summary of farm worker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.*

South Dakota's State Monitor Advocate provides field staff and support agency staff with resources and assistance that is solicited and unsolicited throughout the year. These resources include, but are not limited to:

- Reports made available through the state's management information system, SDWORKS, to provide managers and staff a list of registered MSFWs in DLR offices. These reports are to be used to determine if MSFWs have received the necessary level of services and are treated equitably by staff.
- The State Monitor Advocate visits each local office at least once per year to ensure compliance with required postings, EO regulations, and to provide technical assistance to working with MSFWs.
- The State Monitor Advocate maintains the state's Employment Service complaint log. State Monitor Advocate ensures any complaints are properly referred to the appropriate enforcement agency, and/or are satisfactorily

resolved.

- The State Monitor Advocate is responsible for completion of the Federal quarterly LEARS report submitted to ensure fulfillment of equity indicators are met and that employment service complaints are being handled properly.
- State Monitor Advocate maintains contact with Local Office managers and staff to ensure procedures, policies, and services are provided to MSFWs as well as other job seekers.
- The State Monitor Advocate will attend regional and national MA conferences when called by the Regional Office or National Office upon completion of a meeting or conference, the State Monitor Advocate will provide relevant updates and information to DLR job service office managers and staff.
- State Monitor Advocate will relay directives and other related information to DLR job service office managers and staff when submitted by the Regional Monitor Advocate or National Monitor Advocate.
- The State Monitor Advocate is the direct link between the WIOA 167 provider and the state Department of Labor. The SMA attends meetings quarterly with provider staff, outreach workers, and administrators of the program. An MOU is in place to ensure this occurs. The state also has a data share agreement between the WIOA 167 provider to allow for needed information obtained through state means for provider performance and reporting.
- The State Monitor Advocate also holds the position of Employment Services Director, with daily contact with the DLR Secretary. Further, as Director, the State Monitor Advocate also oversees several other labor programs which assist in MSFW outcomes and oversight by having access to relay information and the ability to direct key staff.

C. Increasing outreach worker training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues

MSFW outreach is primarily performed in partnership by the state's WIOA 167 provider. However, it is the duty of the state monitor advocate to ensure DLR job service office staff and RA Division staff are aware of MSFWs and the assistance and referral opportunities.

Because of the nature of DLR's partnership with the WIOA 167 provider, Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) and the existing MOU maintained with them, state DLR staff work in conjunction with BHSSC staff when an MSFW is identified. Staff is knowledgeable of core programs, services, and activities and referral to RA services. Wagner-Peyser staff receives training through in-person, Dakota Digital Network (DDN), emails, and Skype meetings on a regular basis.

BHSSC is provided with information about the Department's Re-Employment Assistance (RA) (formerly Unemployment Insurance) to allow individuals met during outreach about the basic concepts of RA.

D. Providing State merit staff outreach workers professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers.

As outlined above, there are no full-time state merit staff who perform outreach activities due to the low number of MSFWs in South Dakota as well as the limited personnel resources. However, merit staff are trained and aware of a wide variety of programs and services available through DLR. As one state that has true One-Stop integration of its programs, services, and partner agencies, South Dakota is fortunate to easily and seamlessly transition individuals such as MSFWs to the proper place without causing undue burden or loss of service to the individual.

It was previously mentioned in this narrative that while primary outreach is completed by the WIOA 167 provider, the SMA assists both the provider and state merit staff in training and understanding the basic concepts of outreach, service provisions under various programs and complaint routing to the appropriate entities. NFJP staff have the SMA at their disposal for questions and concerns raised in the field they may encounter. Training and updates on federal regulatory information pertaining to programs, procedures, complaints, and service provisions is made available.

E. Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups.

BHSSC operates the WIOA 167 or National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) in South Dakota. DLR and BHSSC have an ongoing partnership agreement to provide MSFWs with additional services and training opportunities in South Dakota. BHSSC maintains a daily, physical presence in the Sioux Falls Job Service where most MSFW activity takes place.

Additionally, BHSSC maintains an itinerant presence in all other DLR One-Stop Career Centers in the state when needed. They also are invited to DLR One-Stop Career Centers to speak at staff meetings and are annually asked to attend and present at WDC meeting to discuss the NFJP program.

A new MOU between DLR and BHSSC was signed in July of 2018. Modifications were implemented and The WDC approved and signed the MOU in February of 2019.

5) Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

- A. *Providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system. This includes:*
- i. *How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers;*
 - ii. *How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.*

South Dakota maintains a strategic presence in 12 locations (and two itinerant offices) throughout South Dakota. None of the DLR One-Stop Career Centers are considered to be significant MSFW offices nor are any bilingual offices. However, each office is prepared to provide the necessary services to any and all individuals who either need staff-assisted services or able to provide themselves with self-service job seeking information.

Each DLR job service office has individuals trained in a variety of programs from Title III Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Title I, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, and strong relationships with the local DHS Vocational Rehabilitation offices under Title IV. Although several offices have a varying degree of physical presence with partner agencies, partnering presence is available wherever one goes in South Dakota or the ability to have outreach services provided. South Dakota is, again, in a unique position with WIOA since Titles I, II, and III all fall under the administrative and programmatic delivery of DLR. Strong relationships with Vocational Rehabilitation Title IV partners provide a solid foundation of all core WIOA partners. Additionally, required partnerships such as TANF, SNAP E&T, SCSEP, WIOA 167, and others are already directly within our offices or a mere phone call away to provide necessary services to an individual. Other services provided under this umbrella include but is not limited to;

- Assistance with registration into Wagner-Peyser (Employment Services) process to allow an individual to obtain additional services with other programs.
- Provide assistance with job search, resume writing, interview skills, and soft-skills information through the Job Search Assistance Program (JSAP).
- Provide an array of written and electronic information (web sites) of various services provided by the One-Stop Career Centers and One-Stop partners.
- Individuals are provided information regarding labor rights, how to file a complaint, protections, and responsibilities of employers when interviewing and hiring employees.
- DLR One-Stop Career Centers will provide information and encouragement to refer and assess an eligible individual to WIOA Title I for further understanding the person's need for training, what type of training, interests, and possible support services needed.
- Each DLR job service office manager and select staff have been trained on taking any staff or MSFW complaint and who to contact and/or refer the issue to if elevation of the complaint is needed.
- Offices have access to Language Link, a contracted, telephonic interpretive service to provide assistance to Limited English Proficient individuals when providing assistance. This is a no-charge service to any LEP individual who requires it. This assists the state in delivering services while maintaining universality of the One-Stop Career Center.
- Necessary referrals to community support entities and provision of support service funds when warranted.
- Career guidance, interest inventories, skills assessments, and other support structures necessary to assist a person towards successful outcomes.

Agricultural employers are treated in the same manner as non-ag employers in terms of services provided to the ag employer. There is not a differentiation between the two. Every employer is looking for employees to do the work, employees with certain skills, employees capable of showing up to work on time each day scheduled and keeping an eye open for a labor supply to continue to fill his/her jobs. Therefore, ag employers can receive the same level of services and information as non-ag employers. These services include but are not limited to:

- Assistance with on-line employer registrations for access to SDWORKS to provide a wide array of DLR services.

- Placing job orders on behalf of employers.
- Assistance with labor needs.
- Provide Labor Market Information.
- Provide opportunity for an employer to participate in job/career fairs.
- Recruitment activities to locate and obtain employees.
- Assistance with the H2A Temporary labor certification program for agricultural employers who can substantiate a labor shortage in their area for the occupation he/she desires to fill.
- DLR provides housing inspections for ag-employers who file under H2A guidelines.
- DLR One-Stop Career Centers provide employers compliance posters pertaining to labor law.
- Provide information and screening of individuals for job training and WOTC eligibility.
- Local DLR One-Stop Career Centers also have individuals trained to speak directly with all businesses to advise the business about all services DLR could provide to the employer.
- Information on Re-Employment Assistance (RA), formerly known as Unemployment Insurance, and RA Tax provisions and contacts are made available.

B. *Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups.*

DLR has 12 job service office locations around the state (and two itinerant offices). Each office has designated its manager and assistant managers as Complaint System representatives. If an office does not have an assistant manager, the manager may designate another staff person of his/her choosing to provide back-up for the complaint system in times of the manager's absence.

The complaint representative assists all individuals who want to file a complaint, be it an ES-related, non-ES related, or MSFW complaint. Complaint representatives are also aware of the process of providing information immediately to the State Monitor when a complaint pertains to an MSFW.

As part of DLR job service office outreach efforts to job seekers, program participants, MSFWs, employers, and the general public, these groups are aware that a job service office is the best place to begin when needing labor information or wanting to file a complaint against an individual or employer. Additional referrals are made to state and federal Wage and Hour, Human Rights, EEOC, OSHA, and other supporting agencies.

C. *Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.*

The ARS is designed to meet labor needs of agricultural employers, provide job opportunities to farm workers and protect the domestic agricultural workforce. The ARS also allows for proper disclosure of the terms and conditions of employment to seasonal workers who are recruited from outside the local commuting area.

DLR intends to continue what it has done for several years; provide information and services to individuals, employers, the general public, and other interested parties, to ensure the mission of DLR is upheld. That mission reads;

To promote economic opportunity and financial security for individuals and businesses through quality, responsive and expert services; fair and equitable employment solutions; and safe and sound business practices.

This mission is known and is to be carried out by DLR job service office staff and administrative (central office) staff.

A more interactive system, SDWORKS, went live on April 3, 2017 to provide more information to individuals and staff, provide more reporting options to managers and staff, allow for more self-service searching, soft-skills training, and personal activities to be performed at a self-service level for many individuals. This will allow for more engagement by self-service people and provide more time and concentration by DLR job service office staff for individuals who require additional services and hands-on focus. SDWORKS aligns with data collection capabilities required under the WIOA 2014.

6) Other Requirements.

A. *Collaboration. Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFPJ grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase*

collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) administers the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) for the entire state of South Dakota. However, most activity seen by BHSSC is in the eastern part of the state, particularly in the I-29 Corridor. Interstate 29 runs from the Iowa border at N. Sioux City, South Dakota to the northern end of South Dakota at the North Dakota border. While BHSSC maintains contact with DLR offices, its primary, physical presence within the Sioux Falls Job Service is most advantageous to the MSFW populations passing through our state.

Further, Sioux Falls is a primary “target” office for co-location and a logical choice for this due to a number of reasons;

- Sioux Falls is a large trade center for the upper Midwest. It is the largest city between Omaha, NE to the south and the Canadian Border in the north. It is also the largest city between Minneapolis to the east and Denver to the west. A total metropolitan of approximately 265,000 live in a still-vibrant agricultural area.
- Sioux Falls Job Service is the largest One-Stop Career Center in South Dakota.
- Two major interstate routes through Sioux Falls are I-29 and I-90.
- While South Dakota is not a significant MSFW state, it is seen as a “pass-through” for traveling migrant populations.
- Training and job opportunities are the highest in the state.

BHSSC and DLR have a signed MOU between our agencies. BHSSC also has a signed MOU with the WDC. This was easily accomplished due to the strong relationship between these entities created over the years and the mutual goal of assisting job seekers within the farmworker population.

- B. Review and Public Comment. In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.*
- i. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.*

The following MSFW related organizations and agencies were provided the opportunity to submit information and comment on the PY2016 to PY2019 Unified State Plan and Agricultural Outreach Plan: Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, National Farmworker Jobs Program, 221 South Central Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501.

No public comments were received or addressed during this period.

- C. Data Assessment. Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.*

DLR data provided by its Technical Services Division, showed during Program Year (PY)2018:

- Total Wagner-Peyser registrants during the dates indicated: 28,555
- Total Wagner-Peyser enrolled: 9,937
- Total MSFW during the dates indicated (per ETA definition); 66 (received staff assisted services)

	PY17	PY16	PY15
WP Registrants	56,079*	45,947*	48,201*
WP Enrolled	16,963*	19,726*	12,938*
MSFW receiving staff-assisted services	77	51	24

*details of measurements are varied greatly between PY15 thru PY17 due to South Dakota replacing its legacy MIS to an modern, up-to-date WIOA compliant MIS. The system has continually been named SDWORKS. In April 2017, the new version of MIS went on-line. DLR further aligned definitions of the following terms as well as WP services that required staff-assistance to be considered ‘enrolled individuals’. Under the newly defined definitions and on-going staff training, service and enrollment definitions further progressed. In October 2018, (PY18), final federal guidance and definition of services, enrollments, review and initiation of exits through the conversion process, helped finally stabilize the numbers in PY18 comparative to the fluctuations of this chart. SDDL is now in a position with a new MIS, finalized definition and understanding of WP services, removal of exited individuals (who technically should not have necessarily been included in PY15-17), and better reporting processes with the new MIS and WIOA reporting methods, to believe moving forward, the numbers are better reflected as ‘accurate and meeting WIOA guidance.’

Overall performance goals, including Equity Ratio Indicators (ERI) and Minimum Service Level Indicators (MSLI), have been inconsistent. ERI does well performance where the norm is 5 of 5, occasionally 4 of 5, for a performance level of 100% or 80% respectively.

D. Assessment of progress. The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

The MSLI have been slightly more difficult for South Dakota to reach. There are seven indicators in this section. Shortfalls include:

- Placed in a job; This is not usually reached due to low numbers of MSFWs being served and placed in a job rarely, if ever, exceed 20% of the MSFW population being served whereas the required compliance level expected of the program is set at 42.5%;
- Reviews of significant offices; This is impossible for South Dakota to achieve since there are no significant MSFWs in the state. U.S. DOL must take into account that this would be the same outcome for any state that has no significant MSFW offices.
- Field checks conducted; knowing instances of placed MSFWs on farms for migrant or seasonal work, by definition, manpower and budget to conduct a field check makes it difficult to reach this particular indicator. DLR does have an MOU in place with Federal Wage & Hour Division of U.S. DOL and if complaints are received from individuals, the enforcement agency is readily accessible to conduct a field check when and if the complaint warrants.

South Dakota will continue to work towards solutions for satisfactory outcomes in the future by progressing partnerships already established and building new ones with other governmental and private agencies where practical. These partnerships stand the best chance of providing an answer to improvements to meet the state's requirements.

E. State Monitor Advocate. The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

South Dakota's State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3));
2.	If the state has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers;
3.	If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner - Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and
4.	<p>If a state chooses to provide certain ES activities without merit staff, it remains incumbent upon SWA officials to carry out the following activities if they arise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate the discontinuation of service; 2. Make the determination that services need to be discontinued 3. Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued; 4. Approve corrective action plans; 5. Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interest or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days; 6. Enter into agreements with state and federal enforcement agencies for enforcement agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (of the SAW so chooses); and 7. Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for heading in writing before the hearing.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM

(a) **Aligning of Content Standards.** Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

South Dakota's Title II Program, as mandated in section 102 of WIOA, formally adopted a validated set of standards for its delivery of AEFLA instruction, activities, and services on July 01, 2016. In preparation for this required adoption of a standards-based model, a contingency of five South Dakotans attended the April 2014 iteration of the OCTAE-supported College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education's Implementation Institute. During PY2013, the South Dakota Title II program and Technology & Innovation in Education delivered a two-part training on CCRSAE with specific focus on "unpacking" standards and delving into Webb's Depth of Knowledge. (This standards-based Special Project was supported with State Leadership funds.)

Additionally, during PY2015, the State collaborated with LINCS to provide College and Career Readiness training opportunities in both English Language Arts and Mathematics; this professional development consisted of face-to-face and online interaction. DOE adopted in 2010 the Common Core Standards for both English Language Arts and Mathematics. During the 2014 Legislative Session, Governor Dugaard penned an open letter in support of the Common Core Standards.

The Title II program also recalibrated its instruction and activities to align with the GED® 2014 Series—and subsequently the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. In July 2017, at Title II's annual professional development statewide conference, Jane Roy presented two sessions: 1) Preparing Adult English Language Learners for the Workforce: Models and Resources and 2) Introduction to the English Language Proficiency Standards. The aforementioned seems particularly relevant given Jane Roy served as a national Panel Member for the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education.

Most recently in PY2020, South Dakota's WIOA Title II Program supported a statewide team who participated in Cohort II of OCTAE's *Teaching Skills That Matter* (TSTM) initiative. The TSTM lesson plans' inclusion of *Standards Addressed* [section] is proving a key component of the template. This effort already seems to make the Content Standards more accessible for Professional Development, local administrators, and instructors alike. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, this inclusion seems to make the Content Standards more meaningfully actionable within classroom settings, particularly through the lens of contextualized skill-development.

(b) **Local Activities.** Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA): Adult education; Literacy; Workplace adult education and literacy activities; Family literacy activities; English language acquisition activities; Integrated English literacy and civics education; Workforce preparation activities; or Integrated education and training that—

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Special Rule. Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities are redefined as "programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training" (§203 [2]). Therefore, it is South Dakota's intent to consider each of these federally defined activities as potentially allowable and fundable under WIOA Title II.

DLR currently partners [to varying degrees] with Title I, III, and IV; the State seeks to increase the levels of co-enrolled

participants across core programs throughout the grant-cycle. Improved collaboration will be achieved via deliberate coordination amongst the core programs (i.e., emphasis on the State-level *Integrated Resource Team* and *Participants Reaching Employment Potential* [models]), any potential guidance from the South Dakota Workforce Development Council (WDC), and federal memoranda which might clarify or reinforce the Common Measures.

Furthermore, WIOA's Final Rules assist Titles I-IV and the Council in their collective, multilateral implementation of the State's Unified Plan. All eligible providers are required to detail in their application for funds their previous, current, and/or potential communication, coordination, and collaboration with their area One-Stop System (i.e., American Job Center).

It was South Dakota's intent to entertain any viable proposal that seeks to address the heretofore noted [allowable] activities. Depending upon the merit of applications received, the State, in conjunction with the Workforce Development Council, considered alignment and applicability of proposed Title II instruction and services with the broader statewide goals and priorities [as articulated in this Unified State Plan]. At the WDC Meeting in December 2019, Council Members ranked the allowable AEFLA instructional services [as defined in WIOA §203]; the Council's alignment-prioritization for the current grant cycle indicated the highest emphases on literacy, adult education, English language acquisition, and workplace adult education and literacy activities.

The AEFLA program expects to support the delivery of contextualized learning while partnering with Title I and IV programs that can assist with job shadowing, job coaching, work experiences, Job Search Assistance Programs (JSAP), and on-the-job training opportunities. Registered Apprenticeships will become a focus for all job seekers as an option. Managed worksites, soft-skills training, stackable credentials, occupational skills training with workplace-literacy instruction, work-readiness certification (through ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate program), and GED® Testing preparation will all serve the agency's [and WIOA's] priorities of assisting South Dakota residents toward literacy, numeracy, employability, civic engagement, familial responsibility, and self-sufficiency. The suite of Title III services will continue to be available for all job seekers regardless of the participant's point of access.

Beyond efforts to increase the number of co-enrolled Title II students [with Titles I and IV], Title II seeks to reinforce Work Readiness skills in the classroom across ESL, ABE, and ASE programming; this reinforcement consists of delivering relevant professional development, grounding the curricula in College and Career Readiness Standards, highlighting promising practices, and promoting partnerships within the Agency's capacity. Distance Learning, as well as Digital Literacy, will continue to prove prominent throughout the duration of the current grant cycle; this modality [and the requisite skills] intersect with both educational and career advancement. Similarly, Family Literacy may also have more programmatic emphasis than it has in previous years, especially with Title II's adult learners struggling to assist their children who may also be expected to learn remotely resultant of the pandemic.

The core partners and the WDC have made progress concerning Management Information Systems (i.e., data collection, entry, analysis, security, and reporting), a common intake across programs, effective referrals, cost-sharing, and fiscal [management] accountability systems; these policies and protocol will continue to be formalized throughout the implementation of the Unified State Plan.

The following definitions (WIOA Section 203) provide specific detail on the new, altered, and expanded scope of Title II instruction, activities, and services.

- *Adult Education* means academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to
 - read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
 - transition to postsecondary education and training; and
 - obtain employment.
- *Literacy* means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.
- *Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities* means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site

location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.

- *Family Literacy Activities* means activities that are of sufficient intensity and quality, to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family and that better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs, and that integrate all of the following activities:
 - Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency.
 - Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children.
 - Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
 - An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.
- *English Language Acquisition Program* means a program of instruction
 - designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and
 - that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and transition to postsecondary education and training; or employment.
- *Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education* means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training.
- *Workforce Preparation Activities* means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.
- *Integrated Education and Training* means a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

The Agency, to fund eligible providers for the establishment or operation of programs, utilized the 13 federal consideration [as detailed in WIOA Section 231] to evaluate and rank the 2020 grant competition's Applicants. The Title II Program emphasized *Service Need and Provider Capacity* (i.e., AEFLA's Considerations I, II, and XIII) and *Quality and Effectiveness* (Considerations III, V, VI, and IX).

(c) ***Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals.*** Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for: Adult education and literacy activities; Special education, as determined by the eligible agency; Secondary school credit; Integrated education and training; Career pathways; Concurrent enrollment; Peer tutoring; and Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism. Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

South Dakota, under the direct and equitable access process-requirements, held a grant competition in spring 2020; these multi-year grants were awarded via OCTAE-approved processes [as confirmed by the Agency's 2019 Targeted Virtual Monitor of the 2017 RFP].

Pursuant to Section 232 of the Adult Education and Literacy Act, eligible providers desiring a grant under this subtitle must submit an application containing a description of how funds awarded will be spent, and a description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities. DLR will announce the availability of funds through its homepage site; through direct emailing of applications and instructions to existing local program providers, and to any entity that contacted the Title II office to express interest during the previous grant cycle; on the State's e-procurement system; and through Public Notice in major newspapers across South Dakota with statewide distributions.

The Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individualized programming (as funded under §225) was competed using the same application processes used for Section 231 funds. Any applications for full or partial funding under Section 225 were evaluated using the same scoring criteria as all other applications (i.e., §225, 231, or 243). The State considers any of the following academic programs for Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individualized programming

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

At this time, the State reserves the right to consider [federally allowable] academic programs for Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individualized programming

- Special education;
- Secondary school credit; and
- Concurrent enrollment.

The incarcerated population in South Dakota is considered a major target group for adult education services; this target group constitutes a significant portion of the difficult-to-serve adult population. The objective of correctional education programs is to provide educational and job training services, linked to the goal of developing productive and responsible members of society. The South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC) has placed a high priority on achieving the GED® credential. Incarcerated adults generally must have their GED® credential before becoming eligible for parole. Academic programs for basic education with special emphasis on literacy and numeracy offer these adults an increased chance to attain the skills to integrate successfully into society. In addition to DLR's initiative to avail the National Career Readiness Certificate program to DOC's sites, DLR's Job Search Assistance Program [under Wagner-Peyser] is another example of collaboration.

From funds made available under section 225 for a fiscal year, each eligible agency shall carry out corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs. Funds shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic program activities outlined heretofore in this Unified Plan. The activities to be addressed within correctional education are

- Preparing students to receive a high school diploma equivalency;
- Preparing students to make a successful transition to the community;
- Preparing students for gainful employment;
- Promoting teacher professionalism and growth;
- Developing and implementing innovative approaches to improving the basic skills of students; and
- Expanding the use of technology to enhance instruction.

Correctional institutions described in their grant application how they will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Regarding types of institutional settings, a correctional institution could include any of the following:

- Prison
- Jail
- Reformatory
- Work farm
- Detention center
- Halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders

Currently DOC manages the State Prison Systems, and adult education programs are made available to inmates. These

programs include educational services in adult basic education, secondary education, and GED® preparation. Adult education programs may serve local and county correctional facilities in their area. Inmates are usually housed for a varied period of time, and their needs are best determined at the local level. Other facilities such as State Institutions may also apply to operate adult education programs within their facilities or in collaboration with community-based organizations. Depending upon the merit of applications received, the State will, in conjunction with the Workforce Development Council, consider alignment and applicability of proposed Title II instruction and services with the broader statewide goals and priorities [as articulated in this Unified State Plan].

*(d) **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program.** Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, including how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities. Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program and how the funds will be used for the program. Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.*

South Dakota, under the direct and equitable access process-requirements, held a grant competition in spring 2020; these multi-year grants were awarded via OCTAE-approved processes [as confirmed by the Agency’s 2019 Targeted Virtual Monitor of the 2017 RFP]. The provision of Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) activities and services by eligible providers are part of this multi-year grant cycle [in accordance with the Unified State Plan and the federal provisions regulating WIOA’s direct and equitable access processes].

The State shall adopt the federal determinations regarding definitions and destinations. The term “integrated English literacy and civics education” means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English Language Acquisition (ELA) and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.

A fundable IELCE Program must be designed to enable adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Services will also include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. These aforementioned activities must be provided in combination with integrated education and training activities; additionally, these programs funded under §243 must be designed to 1) prepare English language learners for, and place in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and 2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to implement the activities of the program.

The state’s refugee-resettlement entity, as an AEFLA sub-recipient, continues to deliver the sole IELCE programming in South Dakota. Students enroll in Literacy and Oracy Classes, Citizenship Test Preparation, as well as Digital Literacy instruction. Eventually, some of these students are co-enrolled in TANF or Title I Workforce Training, while a number of these non-native speakers are concurrently enrolled in the entity’s *Skills That Employ People* (STEP) classes; STEP classes are specific job-sector training and general workforce preparation in conjunction with Job Developers from the resettlement agency and Employment Specialists from the One-Stop.

These STEP Classes have previously been offered to provide sector-specific Workforce Training in areas such as Commercial Housekeeping, Retail Customer Service, Landscaping & Gardening, Manufacturing Safety, Childcare Training, Food Service & Safety, and Introduction to Patient Care. These intensive, two-week [to four-week] classes have focused on in-demand occupations. Additional classes and curriculum enhancements are also developed as needed to meet local workforce needs.

Workforce Training activities are offered through sector-specific training courses across in-demand occupations and

industries. ELA participants are invited to co-enroll in these STEP classes; the STEP classes include basic skills instruction in the context of sector-specific Workforce Training and use occupationally relevant instructional materials developed in partnership and collaboration with local employers. STEP-class participants are also enrolled in weekly Workforce Preparation classes/workshops such as Job Interviewing, Resume Writing, and Online Job-Applications.

The SD IELCE program develops learners' basic skills (reading and writing, speaking and listening, and numeracy) leading to self-sufficiency and success in community life, employment, further education/training, citizenship, and civic participation. This program integrates civics/citizenship activities into existing English language classes from the Beginning Literacy level to the Advanced level, as well as provides instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, including American history and American systems of government. Plus, the English Language Acquisition (ELA) programming is delivered concurrently and contextually with Integrated Education and Training activities [including Workforce Preparation and Workforce Training].

Workforce Preparation activities are available through the entity's monthly, short-term, managed-enrollment classes in employability skills and digital literacy, embedded in ELA instruction through implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), and incorporated in IET topical units focused on specific transitional skills.

The IELCE program delivers Integrated Education and Training activities through the provision of English Language Acquisition concurrently and contextually with Workforce Preparation Activities (also known as transition skills), which includes basic academics, critical thinking, digital literacy, self-management, resource-utilization, teamwork, and organizational systems. The program integrates transition skills into English language classes in conjunction with the State ESL Competency Checklists and CCRS across all levels of English language instruction [as appropriate respective to Student Performance Levels].

The IELCE program provides short-term, managed-enrollment Workforce Preparation classes, even during the evening; these classes include Integrated Digital Literacy, Basic Computer Skills, Keyboarding, English for Driving, Job Interviews, Math & American Measurements, Resume Writing, and Job Applications.

The IELCE program delivers Integrated Education and Training activities through the provision of English Language Acquisition concurrently and contextually with Workforce Training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions to implement program activities. Instructors have developed and delivered IET units on Workforce Training; these Workforce Training units (called Workplace English for Specific Occupations) highlight in-demand industries and occupations aligned with the current needs of local employers. Moreover, one extensive IET unit, entitled Workplace Communication for Customer Service Careers, was developed to provide basic skills in the context of Workforce Training.

(e) **State Leadership.** Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

The Agency shall use not more than 12.5% of funds made available under the Act for State Leadership Activities for the following [required] adult education and literacy activities:

- The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and One-Stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the Unified State plan under section 102, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.
- The establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.
- The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including o the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic

practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; o the role of eligible providers as a One-Stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and o assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

- The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

DLR will collaborate with other core programs and partner agencies to align and coordinate services for program participants. Leadership funds will be expended to build the capacity of grantees by cross-training One-Stop staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and referral between partners. Furthermore, the development of Career Pathways will continue to be a priority as the Workforce Development Council considers bridge programming and integrated education and training. State Leadership funds will support multiple cohorts of the State's Instructor Development Program(s). These Adult Basic/Secondary and English Language teacher-trainings serve as an induction for new instructors, as well as a refresher for senior staff; the structure of these IDPs incorporates both mentorship and reflection components. The participants review assessment protocol (specifically Data Recognition Corporation's TABE and Center for Applied Linguistics BEST Plus), ABE/ASE/ESL instructional methodologies, program structures, NRS, College and Career Readiness Standards, lesson planning, LD issues, and persistence-related topics.

Students at Adult Basic Education Intermediate Low and High [Educational Functioning Levels] comprised nearly 44% of all reportable learners for PY2020. Given the importance of Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) and its potential impact on statewide programming, South Dakota participated in the STAR 2.0 initiative; moreover, the State intends to continue its support of evidence-based reading instruction throughout the forthcoming grant-cycle. The State's Professional Development Team actively pursues the development of a monitoring and evaluation component to complement the existing structure of informing and training. The trifecta of Information, Training, and Assessment will reinforce the implementation of methodology, policy, and procedure through an "observational" mode of teacher assessment. These classroom/site observations have the capacity to strengthen collegiality across programs and throughout the State. Plans to utilize technology and flipped models may assist the program too as we continue to research Standards Alignment for Classroom to Worksite.

The Agency shall use not more than 12.5% of funds made available under the Act for State Leadership Activities for one or more of the following [*permissible*] adult education and literacy activities:

- The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers;
- The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.
- Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults.
- Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways.
- The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title and in measuring the progress of those program in achieving such objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance.
- The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education.
- Integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers.
- Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities.
- Identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards
- Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.
- The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research

- Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.
- Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

South Dakota leadership monies will support the Management Information System license, technical support, and training; funding for evidence-based reading instruction (STAR 2.0); NRS training; teacher inductions/refreshers (Instructor Development Programs); assessment trainings; AEFLA-related travel; monitors and technical assistance; literacy, numeracy, oracy, and work-readiness professional development for subgrantee instructors; as well as membership in NASDAE.

Other permissible activities funded by State Leadership dollars include our Distance Learning licenses, an occasional bulk purchase of federally approved assessments, the Teacher Quality and Effectiveness Special Projects, mathematics manipulatives to support ongoing investments in Adult Numeracy Instruction initiatives, and the annual professional development conference.

*(f) **Assessing Quality.** Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.*

The State Adult Education and Literacy Program will administer formative assessments and conduct summative evaluations based upon the 13 federal considerations articulated within Section 231[e]; these assessments and evaluations include program monitoring (e.g., desk monitoring, onsite visits, quarterly reports, conference calls, video conferences, and webinars) and a robust Management Information System for student and teacher data.

The assessment of program quality includes ongoing review of the following metrics:

- Funding Amount(s)
- Number of Reportable Students
- Cost Per Participant
- Educational Level Gain or Completion Rate [percentage and historical totals]
- Average Hours Per Student
- Average Hours for Students with Post-Tests
- Total Hours of Classroom Instruction
- Post-Testing Rate
- Number and percentage of Entered Employment
- Number and percentage of Retained Employment
- Number and percentage of Earned High School Equivalency
- Number and percentage of Entered Job Training or Postsecondary Education
- Number and percentage of Intermediate Adult Basic Learners
- Number and percentage of English Language Learners
- Accuracy between the student's hardcopy file and the student's information housed in MIS
- Validity and reliability of pre-test and post-test assessments

The State Adult Education and Literacy Program supports a student management system that allows each local provider to maintain a high-quality information system which has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance against the eligible agency's performance measures. DLR will require each approved program to keep all records current on a monthly basis and submit a quarterly data report.

The State will monitor and analyze data for each program and provide feedback. Student performance measures will also be monitored on a regular basis to ensure continuous improvement at the local level. The State office will work with its sub-grantee providers and the local DLR offices to address the provision of appropriate referrals for individuals eligible for other support services to affect higher rates of student persistence, student achievement, program completion, and successful transitions to the workforce, post-secondary education, or job training. If Technical Assistance does not rectify or ameliorate the perceived situation, an Action Plan will be drafted between the Agency and the Provider explicitly detailing the corrective steps and the expected timeline.

The State's Professional Development Team actively pursues the development of a monitoring and evaluation component to complement the existing structure of informing and training. The trifecta of Information, Training, and Assessment will reinforce the implementation of methodology, policy, and procedure through an "observational" mode of teacher assessment. These classroom/site observations have the capacity to strengthen collegiality across programs and throughout the State. Plans to utilize technology and flipped models may assist the program too as we continue to integrate Teaching Skills That Matter.

The State Title II program partners with the South Dakota Association for Lifelong Learning (SDALL) for assistance with Professional Development plans, administration, deliver, and assessment. In addition to electronic surveys, targeted evaluations of Instructor Development Programs, and Adult Education outreach [to non-AEFLA providers of Adult Education], DLR and the association host open-forum meetings to elicit feedback and to facilitate a candid dialogue. SDALL also publishes an annual newsletter which reaches members (AEFLA and non-AEFLA) to apprise them of upcoming trainings, as well as to share promising practices and vetted resources; SDALL also maintains a website and a social-media presence to complement direct email-contacts.

SDALL continues to support conference-attendance and classroom-based research through scholarships and various cost-sharing efforts with the Agency. DLR's Adult Education and Literacy Program performance measures shall include the following [primary] indicators of performance as described in Section 116:

1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
3. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
4. The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program; and
5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	<i>The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;</i>
2.	<i>The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;</i>
3.	<i>The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;</i>
4.	<i>All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;</i>
5.	<i>A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;</i>
6.	<i>The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;</i>
7.	<i>The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and</i>
8.	<i>The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;</i>
The State Plan must include assurances that:	
1.	<i>The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);</i>
2.	<i>The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;</i>
3.	<i>The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA;</i>
4.	<i>Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.</i>
5.	<i>The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).</i>

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

Instructions: In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions.

South Dakota's WIOA Title II Program shall ensure its Adult Education and Family Literacy Act applicants submit the required description under Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act to the South Dakota DLR. Within a narrative format, each applicant must detail how it intends [as an eligible subrecipient] to maintain equitable access to (and participation in) Adult Education instruction, activities, and services. Based upon local circumstances, the applicant may address any of the statute's six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

As the Agency responsible for administering Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the South Dakota DLR shall further ensure subrecipients have equitable access to both required and permissible State Leadership activities. With specificity, the program will deliver Professional Development opportunities in multiple modalities and structures (e.g., online, archived, onsite, hybrid, flipped-model, chunking strategies, frequent breaks, kinesthetic approaches, etc.) to better accommodate administrators, instructors, support staff, and Agency staff [with disabilities or age-related infirmities].

It should be noted that Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes; moreover, an applicant may use awarded Federal funds to eliminate barriers it identifies.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council.

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

- (1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;*

Input of State Rehabilitation Council

The State Rehabilitation Council is known in South Dakota as the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR or Board). The Board provides advice to and works in partnership with the general vocational rehabilitation agency in South Dakota/Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division).

The Board of Vocational Rehabilitation plays a significant role in ensuring that the vocational rehabilitation program operates effectively and remains responsive to the needs of those served. The Board works in partnership with the Division in developing policies, planning activities, evaluating program effectiveness, and carrying out other functions related to South Dakota's vocational rehabilitation program. The working relationship between the Board and the Division is a partnership focused on ensuring that individuals with disabilities receive appropriate, timely, and effective vocational rehabilitation services resulting in successful employment outcomes for those served.

The Board met on four occasions during Program Year 2020. These meetings were held on 9/29/2020, 12/17/2020, 3/25/2021 and 6/29/2021. These meetings were open to the public and held in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act and the State's open meeting law, SDCL, 1-25-1. In addition, the Board's Executive Committee met on separate occasions before each board meeting. The meeting agendas, minutes and handouts, and other Board related information is posted on the State's Boards and Commissions portal located at boardsandcommissions.sd.gov.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The Board received updates from the Division regarding the provision of services throughout this period during the pandemic. Information included office closures, impact on budget, staff working from home, exploration and use of technology, while ensuring the consumer's ability to participate to the fullest extent possible in their plan for development and implementation.

Exploration of Meeting Formats

The Board and Division tested hybrid meeting options, as well as polling members regarding their use of virtual platforms, i.e., Teams, Zoom. The Board and Division recognized the need to utilize a format that was accessible and would support all members' ability to participate. Videoconferencing has become a preferred mode for meetings and will remain an item of continued discussion.

Annual Report to the Governor and RSA Commissioner

The Board directed staff to draft and complete the annual report. The report was finalized by Board consensus and submitted to the Governor and RSA Commissioner prior to the end of December.

Benefit Specialists Network

The Board learned about changes to the benefit specialists' network, which provides planning and guidance to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries. SSA funds were awarded to individual states, now SSA releases funds to a consortium of states. SSA funds will only support a half time FTE in SD to work with individuals who are not VR recipients. Benefits Specialists will continue to provide services to recent/current VR clients through financial support from the Division which the Board fully endorses.

Fall Conference

Board members participated in the virtual "100 Years of Partnership" conference. Sessions included ethics, ethical dilemmas, hidden addictions, file documentation, fidelity thinking, and customized job development. IL topics were

also offered: understanding hoarding behavior/strategies to support clients, and adverse childhood experiences. Members gained a better understanding of VR/IL issues as well as networked with VR staff and other providers.

Division's Program Initiatives

The Board fully supports the Division's efforts to establish or expand 18-21 transition programs, offer pre-employment transition services, and utilize funding to support other activities. Initiatives included: expanded on-the-job training reimbursement to employers to assist individuals with disabilities in returning to work; increase services for students or youth; establish a training program for service providers; continue with customized employment training; create/disseminate a monthly transition newsletter; increase business engagement; and recruit employment specialist coordinator positions to increase provider capacity.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey

The Board recommended changes to the Consumer Satisfaction Survey instrument and process this past reporting period. A new survey instrument was added for individual's whose case was closed unsuccessful. The survey was implemented FFY 2020 and to date the information gathered reflects the majority of responses falling into the strongly agree or agree with satisfaction of services. The Board and Division will continue to monitor cases closed unsuccessfully as well as review all results annually.

Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP)

The Board fully endorses activities which interface with the educational and workforce systems, as well as post—secondary education, independent living, and other necessary supports to assist students with disabilities and their families in making meaningful choices. The Board requested updates on projects or activities throughout the reporting period. TSLP staff addressed the projects, provision of technical assistance and training, and provided updates on the Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave, transition forums, interagency councils, "Let's Talk About Work" events, Indicator 13 workshops, and Transition Summer Institute. The Board monitors these activities with the understanding that the earlier a student/youth is engaged the better the outcome long-term i.e., employment.

Post-Secondary Education Programs for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

The Board had conversations on Vocational Rehabilitation's role in funding post-secondary education programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The Board sought guidance from Rehabilitation Services Administration and after reviewing information, it was determined that if VR funding is utilized in providing assistance to a VR consumer, that a goal needs to support them in benefiting in terms of an employment outcome.

Employer Initiatives

The Board was provided presentations and updates at meetings throughout this reporting period related to employer supports and services. These presentations were done by the Division's Business Specialists, Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills, and the Business Resource Network of Sioux Falls. Updates were provided on business engagement/staff training, WINDMILLS training, Ability for Hire, and Pre-Employment Transition Services Initiative.

Governor's Awards Ceremony

The Board annually collaborates with the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and Statewide Independent Living Council on the Governor's Awards Ceremony. During this reporting period, the Board moved forward with the solicitation process and approved funds to support this event.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)

The Board approved financial support for the 2020 events with the expectation that proposed activities would emphasize employment issues, increase efforts to obtain the involvement of smaller employers, and improve marketing efforts to reach employers, businesses, and HR managers. The majority of events needed to be restructured and carried out virtually due to the pandemic. The Board appreciated the time and effort dedicated by VR staff and other planning team members to host the events in a successful and inclusive manner.

Local Public Transit Providers

The Board invited Transit Service Providers to present information on their coverage areas, ridership, protocols implemented due to COVID 19 and challenges unique to each area. Dialogue included the need for open and continuous communication and problem solving. Board members were asked to encourage individuals with disabilities to attend local transit board meetings, serve on local transit boards and get involved with discussions.

Appeals Process

The Board was informed of three requests on appeals with the VR program. All three individuals had an administrative review. One individual ended their review while two individuals continued with their appeal to a Fair Hearing. One appeal had the final decision from the Fair Hearing ruling in favor of the Division. This decision was shared with the Board.

District Offices

The Board invited supervisors from several district offices to provide an overview this reporting period. Overviews included office and satellite office locations, identification of staff in each office, counties and school districts served, and partner agencies they work with to include the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS). Members met a variety of staff and the opportunity for dialogue including questions unique to those offices and territories served.

Post-Secondary Outcomes Indicator 14 Survey Results

The Board was provided information and presentation on the post high school outcomes survey conducted for the 2018-19 school year. Results identified a substantial increase in the number of Native American respondents who enrolled in higher education compared to the previous year. Overall response rate was consistent with last years and the findings reported a relatively high overall engagement rate. The Board and Division will continue to monitor the results as questions will be added to the next survey to obtain more informative data.

Business Resource Network and Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills

The Board requested organizational overviews which included descriptors of board of directors, websites, trainings, and partnerships. Dialogue highlighted businesses biggest priority areas and concerns; questions about employees working from home, how to retain valuable employers and other issues or concerns due to the pandemic.

Service Rates Program Guide

The Board provided input on the draft program guide which sets rates for providers to bill the agency. The Board supported a 25% incentive rate to reduce provider staff turnover for providers working after hours and on weekends.

Board Nominations and Appointments

Annually, the Board consults with the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and Statewide Independent Living Council about the need to solicit statewide nominations for their respective board/council membership. Nominations were sought for BVR and SILC during February/March, forwarded to the Governor for her consideration and action, and the Governor made appointments and/or reappointments to each board/council in July.

Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR)

The Board invited DOL staff to present on various services and programs. Members learned of DOL staff working with Department of Corrections, Department of Social Services and Department of Education to explore avenues to reach potential new hires. Members also learned of DOL funding to support youth ages 18-24 to provide training or provide paid work experiences in addition to available assistance for daycare, transportation and/or rent in some situations. The Board supports the partnership with DOL and addressing barriers to employment for many job seekers.

Case File Review

The Board was apprised of the electronic case file review conducted by the Division. The focus of the review was on unsuccessful and current open cases to assess for client engagement and focus on application, eligibility, IPE, services provided and case closure. The Board fully supports Division activities which identify training needs, improve consistency between offices, and assures compliance with federal and state policies.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

The Board is provided updates at each quarterly meeting on SILC activities. This provides increased coordination of working relationships and builds upon the partnership between the Board, SILC, and Division.

Case Scenarios

The Board requested to hear case studies to learn more about the VR process and services provided. A family member spoke to a participant's involvement with VR, because the participant was unavailable. The participant was a high school student who had been on an IEP since the age of four. His disability was outlined in terms of how it impacts functional limitations. He received services to include situations assessments, participation in Project Skills, work experiences and now he is considering post-secondary education.

The second scenario outlined a VR counselor working with a participant with physical health and cognitive challenges. Services included testing, situational assessments, identifying needed accommodations, job coaching, development of soft skills, work tolerance, and involvement of IL services (learning how to utilize transit and budget money). The participant is working part time with periodic follow-up with the job coach and counselor. The Board recommends hearing and learning from a variety of scenarios as it increases members knowledge about vocational rehabilitation services and services are based upon each person's unique needs.

(2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

The Board of Vocational Rehabilitation Services provided valuable input into the Division's activities and policies. All recommendations by the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation Services were accepted.

(3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

No recommendations were rejected

b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness *When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non- statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:*

(1) a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;

The South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) has implemented a work experience program for students with disabilities called Project Skills. This venture is a cooperative arrangement with the local school districts and the Division. South Dakota has 151 public school districts and 20 Tribal/Bureau of Indian Education Schools statewide. The Division makes this program available to all schools with approximately 143 public/tribal school districts participating in the program. The program is available to the remaining school districts, but they have chosen not to enter into a contract with the Division.

Types of Services to be Provided

Many students with significant disabilities don't have an opportunity to gain paid employment experience while in high school. Although willing, most employers cannot afford the supports these students frequently require on their first job. This is an important learning, maturing, and socializing experience. The Division of Rehabilitation Services funds a program entitled "Project Skills" to address this need. This program is a cooperative arrangement between the State VR Agency and the local school systems. The Division funds the wages, workers compensation, and FICA while the schools provide the job development, job coaching, and follow—along services for the student at the job site. By entering into a contractual agreement with the Designated State Unit, the local school districts are assuring that they will provide the non—federal share of the matching funds, including funds contributed to the school by a private agency, organization or individual.

(2) the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

Written Assurances Each participating school enters into a written agreement with the Division for Project Skills. This agreement requires the school district to provide written assurance that they will use non-Federal funds for their share of the Project Skills program. The Project Skills program is available only for Vocational Rehabilitation clients. School

Districts cannot serve non-Division clients and the Division approves the Project Skills Program by completing a work agreement and authorization of services. All state plan requirements for the Division will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

(3) requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

Requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver. All services provided under this waiver are provided under an approved Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) and authorized by the vocational rehabilitation client's VR Counselor. The Division assures that all State Plan requirements, including the Order of Selection if appropriate, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

(1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) have an excellent working relationship with the Workforce System in South Dakota. The cooperation between our agencies is done by formal written agreements and informal arrangements.

The Department of Human Services updated in March 2018, a **Memorandum of Understanding** with DLR. This agreement addresses:

- Provide comprehensive services designed to assist the unemployed citizens of the State of South Dakota in obtaining gainful employment;
- Support the underemployed citizens of the state in preparing for a new and more rewarding career;
- Provide the youth of South Dakota with a positive introduction into the world of work and subsequently providing follow-up and guidance to youth once they enter the workforce;
- Provide universal access to all customers, including those with special needs or barriers to employment;
- Provide customer choice in the way they access services, and in the services themselves, based on individual need;
- Allow integrated services through a planning process at the state and local levels, coordinate activities and services for customers, and share information and client data; and
- Be fully aware of the role each Partner has within the system and to understand the services each Partner provides.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with DLR on 3/26/2018 and then amended on 3/6/2019. This agreement addresses data sharing between agencies for common performance reporting.

Other interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system consist of:

Project Skills

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has cooperative agreements with local school districts throughout South Dakota for the provision of transition services. This program provides paid work experiences in student's career areas to help them prepare for adulthood and the world of work.

Project Search

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has cooperative agreements with local Project Search sites for Aberdeen, Brookings, Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Sturgis locations. This agreement lays out each party's responsibility for the Project Search activities.

(2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

The Division of Rehabilitation Services receives funding under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. A contract is developed annually with Black Hills Special Services Cooperative/Dakota Link for the implementation of these

services.

(3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

These agreements typically are associated with AgrAbility Programs. South Dakota did receive an AgrAbility grant on the Pine Ridge Reservation during the summer of 2019. Currently there is not an agreement in place with this project.

(4) Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

The Division of Rehabilitation Services currently does not have any formal agreements with non-educational programs serving out-of-school youth.

(5) State use contracting programs.

The State of South Dakota does not have a "State Use Law.

d) Coordination with Education Officials. Describe:

(1) The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (Designated State Unit) plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has been a leader in innovative transition services for students with disabilities. Most recently a new administrative position within the Division was developed whose sole focus is increasing transition services for students with disabilities and coordination efforts with Education Officials. The focal point of this success in transition services is the partnership between the DRS and the Office of Special Education in co-funding the Transition Services Liaison Project. This project initiates the following successful transition activities:

- Transition Services Liaison Project: TSLP provides technical assistance and training to students with disabilities, families, local education agencies and adult service agencies to promote the movement from school to post-school activities. There are four Transition Liaisons and a Transition Services Liaison Project Coordinator to provide these activities. TSLP manages the transition programs listed below.
- Project Skills: Project Skills is a paid work experience program for high school students with disabilities in South Dakota. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies and local school districts which provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach. Project Skills helps to build the student's work history, references and assists them with experiencing different career fields as they mature and take on new challenges.
- Project Search: Project Search is a national model partnering with a large employer, local school district or educational cooperative, and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program. South Dakota currently has 5 Project Search Initiatives in operation in Aberdeen, Brookings, 2 in Sioux Falls (Teachwell Education Cooperative and Sioux Falls School District) and Rapid City area. A 5th Project Search initiative has been added in Sioux Falls and began the 2020 fall school year.
- Youth Leadership Forum: YLF is a unique career and leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors to learn more about self-advocacy skills and disability awareness. Students with disabilities cultivate leadership, citizenship, and social skills as a result of participating in this annual five-day event. The YLF was implemented at the state level by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, and other state and local partners.
- Catch the Wave: A one-day conference designed specifically for high school students who have a disability and are considering post-secondary education (either college or technical institutes). Students learn about preparing for college life, securing appropriate accommodations, and developing self-advocacy and communication skills.
- Let's Talk About Work: A one-day conference designed specifically for high school students who have a disability who are needing to learn more about what it takes to be a successful employee. They are also given the

opportunity to meet local employers to discuss needed employment soft skills for specific jobs.

- Regional Transition Forums: These forums are informal and interactive meetings for providers of services, transition-age students with disabilities, as well as consumers and family members.
- Post-Secondary Disability Coordinators Forums: This forum is held annually in Chamberlain inviting all the Disability Coordinators from South Dakota Post-Secondary programs, vocational rehabilitation staff, Transition Liaisons, and Office of Special Education staff. This has been a very successful initiative helping the transition process for students with disabilities.
- Summer Institute: The Summer Institute is a statewide training opportunity for Special Education teachers who are assisting students in the transition process. It is held for one week in the summer and offers training in areas of IDEA, introducing self-determination curriculum and other assessment materials, and IEP planning. Teachers receive graduate credit for the class and gain knowledge from Disability Services Coordinators from post-secondary schools, vocational rehabilitation staff, Transition Liaisons, community mental health agencies and independent living services staff.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

The Division is networking with the Office of Special Education and other transition agencies to assure Pre-Employment Transition Services are available throughout the State. A brochure targeting students with disabilities has been developed and distributed across the State. Most of the services listed above qualify for the Pre-Employment Transition Services. In addition, the Division is looking at ways to expand the self-determination training component to be available in all the school districts

Since the summer of 2016, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) have offered funding opportunities to Local Education Agencies and community providers during the summertime for training opportunities relevant to Pre-ETS for students with disabilities. Areas that are required to be included in the curriculum include job exploration activities, workplace Readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and information about vocational rehabilitation services and other programs available to assist individuals with disabilities.

Development and Approval of an IPE before leaving school

The Division is making great efforts to assure that students with disabilities access the vocational rehabilitation program and develop their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) before they complete high school. Following are some of these activities:

- Division VR Counselors contact school counselors and 504 coordinators on a regular basis to identify and meet with students.
- Division VR Counselors inform school staff what services are available to students with disabilities and eligibility requirements. VR Counselors then follow up on referral in a timely fashion in order to determine eligibility prior to graduation.
- Division VR Counselors and other Division staff will attend interagency meetings in order to inform other service organizations about Rehabilitation Services and obtain referrals of these students.
- The Division will continue funding Project Skills to include serving students with disabilities who are not receiving special education services.

(2) Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

(A) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;

The South Dakota Cooperative Agreement Concerning Transition Services for Students with Disabilities was revised on July 2020. This agreement includes the following South Dakota entities: Office of Special Education, Division of Workforce and Technical Education, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, DLR, Division of Behavioral Health, and Division of Child Protection Services.

The agreement was created to operationalize South Dakota's transition process, Local Educational Agencies and Adult Services Agencies who are part of this agreement, will coordinate transition services for students and youth with

disabilities. Coordination maximizes existing resources, thus avoids duplication and promotes continuity of service provision. This coordination is important as it assures compliance with providing required services as well as compliance with federal and state laws. The cooperating agencies will also encourage staff to take part in trainings sponsored by the other cooperating agencies to ensure that services are provided by qualified and appropriately certified staff.

(B) *transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;*

The cooperating agencies agree that a transition plan, as a component of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), will be initiated for every student with a disability age 16 and older or at a younger age as determined by the Local Education Agency. To the extent possible, the IEP will be integrated in the planning documents of all coordinating agencies, and where possible, eliminates duplication of such plans. The IEP will outline all transition services necessary to successfully transition to the next environment or service delivery system and have access to appropriate independent living options in integrated community-based settings.

(C) *roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;*

The agreement identifies each agency's roles and responsibilities including:

- Consultation and technical assistance to assist in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
- Transition planning by personnel of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and school district personnel;
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency including State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
- Financial responsibilities; and
- Procedures for outreach and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(D) *procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.*

The cooperating agencies will work together to market the services available between Local Educational Agencies and Adult Services Agencies to increase access to and opportunities for transition services. For these agencies to carry out effective planning and assessment of transition services, meaningful data on student needs and service outcomes must be available. The cooperating agencies agree to share with each other data on the needs of students with disabilities and the outcomes of services and programs.

e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations. *Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.*

Due to the geographic reality which exists within South Dakota, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) recognizes one of the best sources available for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services are Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP). CRPs consist of Community Support Providers, Mental Health Centers, Career Learning Centers, Centers for Independent Living, Communication Services for the Deaf, and the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. These programs are located in local communities throughout the state.

Utilization of CRPs and other Employment Specialists Providers

During Program Year 2018, 26.34% of the Division's client services expenditures (approximately \$1,158,308 was paid to CRP's). In addition, establishment grants were issued with CRPs for the expansion of supported employment services.

Manner in which cooperative arrangements are established

The Division utilizes Program Guide DRS/DSBVI 2019-01 - Provider Standards to establish approved service providers and procedures to approve service providers. Applicants/eligible individuals are provided choices in available service providers for them to select from. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor then issue authorizations to the provider for services agreed upon in the Individual Plan for Employment. The scope of services purchased depends upon the individual's needs and employment goal.

Improve capacity and quality of services from CRPs

To help expand the capacity and quality of services from community rehabilitation programs, the Division of Rehabilitation Services offers establishment grants to develop or expand their service capacity. The focus of these establishment grants is to expand supported employment services for youth with disabilities and other individuals with significant disabilities.

The Division continually works on improving the quality of services from CRPs. The Division has provided numerous training initiatives and opportunities for CRP personnel to become a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP). Service providers who become certified and complete a two-day Person-Centered Training will receive a 25% increase in their service rates. Maintaining their CESP certification will require the service provider to complete 36 continuing education hours every 3 years.

- f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services.**
Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

The heart of supported employment is the coordination of the time limited and the on-going support services. The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has been very proactive in working collaboratively with service providers and public agencies to coordinate funding sources and policies. These efforts are categorized into two areas: Formal Cooperative Agreements and Informal Cooperative Efforts with Agencies.

Formal Cooperative Arrangements

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has in place a formal cooperative agreement for transition services for youth with disabilities. This agreement is with the Department of Human Services (DHS) Divisions of Rehabilitation services, Developmental Disabilities, and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired; Department of Social Services (DSS) Division of Behavioral Health Services; Department of Education (DOE) Office of Special Education, and DLR. The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to define:

- services including supported employment,
- eligibility requirements,
- referral process,
- responsibilities of each agency,
- extended support services to be provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities,
- extended support services to be provided by the Division of Behavioral Health Services,
- time-limited services to be provided by the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired,
- service plan development,
- requirements for transition to extended services, and
- responsibilities for post-employment services.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities updated the Policy Memorandum on June 18, 2018 with the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. This Policy Memorandum defines how each agency's funding sources are coordinated regarding the time limited and on-going support services. This policy agreement has had a significant impact in changing how services are provided to individuals with the most significant impediments to obtain and maintain their employment.

On July 7, 2018, a document was updated to coordinate the services and funding between the Divisions of Behavioral Health Services, Rehabilitation Services, and Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired. This document serves as a policy directive for the Community Mental Health Centers and the local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices. It provides guidance in three areas relative to providing vocational services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness:

1. What services can and should be provided by the Community Mental Health Centers,
2. What services are available from Vocational Rehabilitation, and

3. Which Division pays for the different services.

Informal Cooperative arrangements with agencies

The Division of Rehabilitation Services continually works collaboratively with other State agencies on a day-to-day basis to better serve individuals with disabilities. Following are some of these collaborative efforts:

- The State Office of the Division of Rehabilitation Services is co-located with the Divisions of Developmental Disabilities, and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. Our agencies can easily communicate to coordinate services between Divisions.
- Eight of the eleven Division's field offices are co-located with DLR One-Stop Career Centers.
- The public vocational rehabilitation agencies are working closely with all partners identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to collaborate in the implementation of the new law. Division staff serves on implementation workgroups, task forces, the State Workforce Development Council and on local Workforce Committees

g) Coordination with Employers. *Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:*
(1) VR services; and

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has been very proactive in working collaboratively with employers. These initiatives consist of:

- “Ability For Hire” initiative: “Ability For Hire” is an business outreach campaign emphasizing the promotion of hiring, advancement, and retention of employment for people with disabilities in South Dakota’s workforce. The content materials consist of a website (www.abilityforhire.com), printed materials in the form of brochures, previous radio advertisement, commercials, videos, and other success stories. It officially launched on 08/11/2015. This is also designed to promote the public’s awareness of the available resources and services that DRS offers to employers and people with disabilities.
- Point of Contact: The Division has designated a single point-of-contact (business specialist) to disseminate materials, conduct trainings, and serve as a resource to employers, providers, and people with disabilities throughout the state.
- Business—Led Models: There are two nonprofit entities available in South Dakota offering supports to the business communities which are led by employers (business—led model). They are the Business Resource Network in Sioux Falls and the Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills. Each entity has an Executive Director. Both entities have an approved contract in place with the Division to provide education, consulting, and technical assistance to businesses on the hiring, accommodations, supports, and retention when employing people with disabilities. DRS has also developed, through small Seed grants, for three business-led initiatives. These initiatives are in Yankton, Brookings and Aberdeen. They promote information to businesses/employers on hiring people with disabilities through various business connections and social media.
- Business Organization Involvement: The Division is working towards increasing memberships and regular involvement of staff within non—disability related organizations in efforts to collaborate with employers. Some examples of the organizations consist of the local Chamber of Commerce, Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM), and the South Dakota Retailers Association. These opportunities allow for connecting with businesses to learn more about their workforce needs and identify any disability training needs they may have.
- Employer Resource Guide: The Division has an Employer Resource Guide consisting of information and resources available to employers regarding various aspects of disability—related topics.

(2) *transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has been very proactive in working collaboratively with employers for Pre-Employment Transition Services. These initiatives consist of:

- Project Skills: Project Skills is a paid work experience program with employers for high school students with disabilities in South Dakota. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies, employers and local school districts which provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach. Project Skills helps to build the student’s work history, references and assists them with experiencing different career fields as they mature and take on new challenges. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and school staff identify employment sites,

businesses, employers to match the areas which students have expressed an interest in working.

- Project Search: Project Search is a national model partnering with a large employer, local school district and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program. South Dakota currently has 5 Project Search Initiatives in operation at Aberdeen, Brookings, Rapid City, Sturgis and Sioux Falls.

h) Interagency Cooperation. Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

(1) the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has other formal and informal interagency arrangements and levels of cooperation.

State Medicaid Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act

DSS is the state's Medicaid Agency. DHS has the following agreements with the DSS Medicaid Agency.

- Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation as well as Guardianship and Conservatorship: This agreement was updated March 2018 to assure each agency's response to meet the needs of persons who are at risk for abuse, neglect and exploitation or in need of guardianship and or conservatorship services.
- Money Follows the Person: This agreement was implemented on June 10, 2014 for the implementation of the Money Follows the Person initiative involving persons eligible for waiver services.
- Medicaid Fraud Control: This agreement was implemented on July 1, 2015 for the purpose of defining mutual responsibilities in the Medicaid Program to ensure maximum efficiency and benefit to the State and to minimize duplication of effort.
- Title XIX Medicaid Funding Memorandum of Understanding: This agreement was implemented on February 15, 2013 for the purpose of defining administrative and fiscal accountability responsibilities.
- Protected Health Information Memorandum of Understanding: This agreement implemented policy on restrictions of disclosing protected health information.

(2) the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities is the state agency responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. This agency is in the same department as the State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs allowing regular communication between programs.

Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

This agreement was updated on July 2017 for the purpose of enabling students with disabilities to reach their maximum potential in their transition from high school to the adult world. This agreement included the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, Developmental Disabilities Agency, DSS Division of Behavioral Health Services, DOE Special Education and DLR.

Policy Memorandum with Developmental Disabilities

The Division of Developmental Disabilities updated the Policy Memorandum on June 2018 with the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. This Policy Memorandum defines how each agency's funding sources are coordinated in regards to the time limited and on-going support services. This policy agreement has had a significant impact in changing how services are provided to individuals with the most significant impediments to obtain and maintain their employment.

(3) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

The DSS Division of Behavioral Health Services is the state agency responsible for providing services to individuals with mental illness. In December of 2018, the Memorandum of Understanding was updated to help coordinate the services and funding between the Divisions of Behavioral Health Services, Rehabilitation Services, and Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired. This document serves as a policy directive for the Community Mental Health Centers and the local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices. It provides guidance in three areas relative to providing vocational services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness:

- What services can and should be provided by the Community Mental Health Center,
- What services are available from Vocational Rehabilitation, and
- Which agency pays for the different services.

i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

- (A) **Qualified Personnel Needs.** Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:
- (i) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) has implemented several strategies to ensure trained staff is delivering quality services to applicants and clients with whom division personnel work. Currently one employee is primarily responsible for activities related to the comprehensive system of personnel development.

Data System of Personnel and Personnel Development

The current system to collect and analyze data related to qualified personnel needs and personnel development consists of two components. The South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) maintains a database of all training activities attended by Division staff including BHR training, seminars, workshops, conferences, and undergraduate and graduate level courses supported by the Division. Individual offices maintain files on educational backgrounds, training activities and goals and plans for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to meet the personnel standards to become a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and receive Commission of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). Supervisors are required to address training needs as a part of the annual employee evaluation. Individual training needs are reported to the Training Officer to be considered in the implementation of results from the annual training needs assessment.

The Division utilizes a web-based management information system (VR FACES) for data tracking of the CSPD for staff. The VR FACES tracks all the employees of the Division, their office structure, race, supervisor, disability, job classification, and other relevant information to the position. The system also tracks if VR Counselors are a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) or their development plan to become a CRC. Input of information is required of individual employees and supervisors with access to all information by the Training Officer and other management staff. This system is efficient for addressing individual training needs as well as projecting for future personnel and training priorities and progress of staff toward meeting CSPD requirements. The following table identifies current staffing patterns for the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Total positions Program Year 2020

11 Clerical
 7 Counselor Aides
 38 VR Counselors
 5 Supervisors
 8 Management
 1 Interpreter
 Total = 69

For Program Year 2020, the ratio of counselors compared to applicants and eligible individuals served is an average 96 clients per counselor. The remaining active caseload as of 6/30/2021 was an average of 56 active clients per caseload. The changes in the caseload size are typically impacted by the changes in the economy and unemployment rates. It is the goal of the Division of Rehabilitation Services to remain under the ratio of 80 active clients for each counselor. The Division evaluates the need for a position before replacing it. In previous years, vacant positions have been relocated to other parts of the state with more need or change to a different position type as needed.

(ii) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel

Current Vacancies as of 06/30/2021

- Clerical = 0
- Counselor Aides = 0
- VR Counselors = 0
- Supervisors = 0
- Management = 0
- Other = 0

(iii) projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services anticipates the need to recruit at least 10 Qualified VR Counselors in the next five—year period. This includes vacancies for five vocational rehabilitation counselors who are eligible for retirement in the next five years.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services anticipates the need to recruit 5 clerical positions, 1 counselor aide position, 10 VR counselor positions, and 1 management position over the next 5 years.

(B) **Personnel Development.** Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

- (i) a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program; South Dakota State University in Brookings is the only higher education program in South Dakota that offers a masters degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

South Dakota State University (SDSU) in Brookings is the only higher education program in South Dakota that offers a masters degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The Division has a cooperative arrangement with SDSU in providing internship opportunities, participation on their advisory board and recruitment of qualified candidates. The Division has been providing paid internship opportunities for students pursuing their master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation. The Division also offers unpaid internship opportunities for students with other degrees when our offices have space available. The Division works cooperatively with the South Dakota State University in providing professional educational career tracks for individuals with disabilities. Some of these interns are recipients of the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program needing the internship as part of their Individual Plan for Employment.

(ii) the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD has approximately 19 students enrolled at a given time.

(iii) the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

During School year fall 2020 and spring 2021 three students graduated from SDSU Masters in VR program and all were on the RSA funding. These students sit for their certification with Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

(2) **Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel.** Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

Recruitment of qualified staff including individuals with minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities is

accomplished through promoting vacancies at universities in Region VIII with master level programs. The University of Colorado, Montana State University, South Dakota State University and Utah State University are also sources for recruitment of graduates with master's level degrees in vocational rehabilitation counseling. In addition, South Dakota has three State public universities with programs offering master degrees in counseling. These three State Universities have expanded their class locations to other universities and distance learning options. Graduates of the following programs are recruited for vocational rehabilitation counselor openings: Doctorate of Education program options, Counselor of Education and Counseling Practice; School Psychology and Educational Psychology, Mental Health Counseling, or Master of Arts in Counseling or Educational Psychology. Graduates are hired and trained to prepare for the CRCC to meet the highest qualifications in the state for rehabilitation counselors. During the next five years, it is projected that up to 6 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors will be hired who are graduates of these programs.

The announcements for all state positions including the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions are posted on the State web page. The Division forwards the job openings to the South Dakota professional organizations such as the South Dakota RehabACTion Association. The announcement is also sent to client organizations such as the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.

Retention and advancement are accomplished through the opportunity for all entry—level vocational rehabilitation counselors to participate in masters level vocational rehabilitation education programs and, once meeting the requirements for “Senior Counselor”, receive promotion to this level. Leadership and management training and assignments with senior level management teams assist counselors to prepare for supervisory and administrative positions. Senior rehabilitation counselors are encouraged to apply for management and administrative positions when vacancies occur. Opportunities for promotion are available through announcements of supervisory and management positions provided those candidates meet the requirements for the position.

To address the priority of recruiting individuals with disabilities, Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) has in Administrative Rule the requirement that individuals with disabilities are automatically certified applicants to be interviewed. In addition, any eligible applicant for employment who has been certified severely disabled by a rehabilitation counselor will be certified (eligible to interview) regardless of the ranking the applicant receives compared to other applicants. This ensures individuals who have disabilities have the opportunity to interview and compete for openings in the designated state unit.

- (3) ***Personnel Standards.*** *Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:*
- (A) *standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and*

Working in conjunction with BHR, the Division has established minimum standards for vocational rehabilitation counselors, senior vocational rehabilitation counselors and district supervisors. These standards are reviewed periodically in light of changing personnel needs, labor market supply and training resources. The Division relies on state standards for secretary, counselor aide and program administrator positions. These are generic job classifications within the BHR system. The Division has established specific knowledge, skills and ability requirements in order for individuals to enter these positions.

Newly hired Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are preferred to have a degree that will lead towards CRC certification or, if they possess only a bachelor's degree, are encouraged to pursue a master's degree as a condition of employment. Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are certified through the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor process. The priority in filling VR Counselor vacancies is a master's degree and CRC certification. Eligibility for CRC certification (already possesses a master's degree but no certification) is the next preferred option. Due mostly to lower starting salaries compared to surrounding states, it is necessary to hire individuals with bachelor's degrees for entry—level positions and prefer they become qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are preferred to have a master's degree that will lead towards CRC certification or

if they possess only a bachelor's degree, each new hire is encouraged to pursue a master's degree. The Division does support costs associated with pursuit of master's degrees. Funds for support of employees to obtain a master's degree consist of RSA stipends and program 110 funds. Once entry level counselors have accomplished obtaining a master's degree and CRC certification, they can request a promotion to Senior Rehabilitation Counselor.

The Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) by the Commission of Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) and they have demonstrated the ability to work independently in developing Individual Plans for Employment.

Currently all District Supervisors meet the requirements for a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Meeting this standard is preferred but not required for a District Supervisor. District Supervisors must have experience in working with people with disabilities, knowledge of the vocational rehabilitation program, and must have the ability to manage a budget, personnel and office operations. If the District Supervisor does not have the credentials of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), then a timeline will be established to obtain the CRC.

(B) the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Rehabilitation Act as amended and the Vocational Rehabilitation regulations refer to personnel as "Qualified Personnel" and "Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors". The Division has defined these positions as follows: Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor: All Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, District Supervisors and State Office Personnel

- a. meets the standards for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor;
- b. meets the standards for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor except is not CRC certified; or
- c. meets the standards for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; has been employed by the Division as a VR Counselor for a minimum of six months; (This employee does receive oversight and monitoring of the non-delegated functions of the VR process.)

. As of 06/30/2021, 17 VR Counselors are in a plan for CRC with 4 of them able to take the CRC examination in 2022. 18 VR Counselors are Senior VR Counselors and have their CRC.

Qualified Personnel

The Division is committed to assist vocational rehabilitation counselors to obtain the necessary academic training and professional experience to meet the standards of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. During Program Year 2020, 12 Division employees were pursuing their Vocational Rehabilitation master's degree program through South Dakota State University or Virginia Commonwealth University. One individual graduated during the past year with a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation and received their CRC. Another important strategy is coordination of resources to access the most comprehensive training opportunities. This category of individuals includes 7 Counselor Aides.

Now more than ever, the Division is aligning resources to better support businesses in South Dakota in their efforts to hire people with disabilities. The labor force is evolving, and the labor needs of businesses are evolving as well. In order to stay in tune with these changes, the Division will use available training resources such as DLR and available data through the Labor Market Information Center to identify labor market trends and opportunities. DLR offers a Labor Market Information e-Learning Series which is based on a benchmark PowerPoint version provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA). This training is a five-part video series available to all Division staff and addresses workforce information relevant to the 21st century labor force.

*(4) **Staff Development.** Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:*

(A) a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated

The Division is committed to assist vocational rehabilitation counselors to obtain the necessary academic training and professional experience to meet the standards of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. During FFY 2018 and FFY 2019, 11 Division employees were pursuing their Vocational Rehabilitation master's degree program through Southern University, South Dakota State University or Virginia Commonwealth University. Five individuals graduated during the past two years with a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation and received their CRC. Another important strategy is coordination of resources to access the most comprehensive training opportunities.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services approaches personnel development through a number of avenues. Each employee's current level of education and training, as well as short term and long-term training needs are tracked by supervisors who evaluate methods for addressing these needs annually through the Accountability & Competency Evaluation (ACE) review system. Individual training needs assessments are conducted to evaluate current levels of education, understanding of fundamentals of vocational rehabilitation, disability-related issues, professional development and related topics. Self-evaluation and supervisor input and recommendation sections on the ACE assist in assessing needs for training which may be pursued through a number of approaches. The results of the assessments are recorded for individuals, groups of related positions (i.e. rehabilitation counselors, supervisors, managers, clerical etc.) and for the agency.

Training for personnel is delivered through workshops, conferences, video conferencing, one-on-one mentoring and webinars. The Division also utilizes e-mail and web links to disseminate information on research, studies and other relevant information related to disabilities and vocational rehabilitation.

The ACE system allows for ongoing feedback between employees and supervisors by incorporating a self-audit while addressing professionalism, work quality and areas for development as well as areas of strength. Training needs are addressed utilizing a form that not only identifies needed training, but also includes fields for the date the training is scheduled and the date it is attended.

BHR workshops are identified under the following headings: supervisory, job enrichment and technology with "other training" and "job-specific skills" included in the document used to track need and attendance. The training officer works with agency supervisors to identify resources for obtaining training in areas related to vocational rehabilitation (including the Rehabilitation Act Amendments, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and RSA regulations), including serving individuals with the most significant disabilities and those of minority backgrounds. Training needs are also identified through input from clients responding to satisfaction surveys and input from the State Rehabilitation Council.

Cooperation with other entities in state government such as DLR, DOH, and DOE, ensures that training opportunities are available which address topics relevant to the field of rehabilitation. Staff has access to intensive training which applies to serving individuals with disabilities. These conferences and/or seminars are also an opportunity to collaborate with other entities who deliver services to individuals with disabilities. In addition, vocational rehabilitation personnel regularly provide training concerning considerations when working with individuals with disabilities to DOLR employees. Paraprofessional staff (i.e. counselor aides and clerical staff) are offered ongoing training in word processing, other software applications and office related courses such as effective writing, organization skills, etc., through BHR. Courses specific to the vocational rehabilitation management information system and requirements specific to vocational rehabilitation staff are offered through in-service training sessions usually provided by agency specialty staff. Leadership development and capacity building are addressed through distance learning courses as well as agency sponsored training sessions. Assistive technology training is available through DakotaLink (state's assistive technology project) or BIT (for employees with disabilities who utilize assistive technology on the job). Annual training conferences and monthly video conferences address policy changes or training needs that have been identified in the annual training needs assessment.

Cooperative agreements are in place with the state's five Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs to provide training to staff on cultural diversity.

(B) *procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.*

The Division has established liaison relationships and cooperative agreements with the other partner agencies that are included in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act and the State Unified Plan. The training officer is on a work group with other agency's training officers to plan joint training initiatives. The Director of the Division of Rehabilitation Services as a member of the state's Workforce Investment Council deals with training issues system wide.

Training needs of the state's Native American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Programs, Centers for Independent Living, the Client Assistance Program and Community Based Rehabilitation Programs are considered in planning annual training activities. Training needs are addressed through a variety of resources including workshops, conferences and seminars hosted by other organizations such as Special Education, DLR, Parent Connection, BHR training, professional organizations, client organizations (SD Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, SD Association of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind of SD, Community Support Providers of South Dakota, SD National Alliance of Mental Illness and the SD Association of the Deaf), and distance learning are examples of sponsors of training activities in which staff participate. Independent study and mentoring by supervisors and senior rehabilitation counselors are other means for meeting individual staff development needs.

The Division does not currently participate in research to disseminate to staff.

(5) *Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs. Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.*

The Division does employ an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter who is available for all training sessions to clients who are deaf or deaf/blind. If additional interpreters are needed, the Division contracts for these services. Braille, materials on disk and enlarged print are provided to all staff or clients who request alternative formats. The Division has developed fee schedules and vendors to pay for interpreters of foreign languages and Native American interpreters. The Division also contracts foreign language interpreting services through Language Line Solutions for interpreting services via telephone.

(6) *Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.*

Training on IDEA and transition services for students with disabilities is coordinated with the DOE Special Education Program and the State Transition Project. The annual Youth Leadership Forum is planned in collaboration with the Special Education Program, Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Transition Project. The annual Fall Conferences were a combined effort with the Special Education Program, DLR which offered a series of transition presentations.

j) Statewide Assessment

(1) *Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:*

The Division of Rehabilitation Service and the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation jointly conducted the "Comprehensive statewide Needs Assessment" (CSNA) in November 2019. The results of the CSNA were then utilized in the development of the goal and strategies for the FFY 2020 "VR Portion" of the WIOA South Dakota State Unified Plan. As a core partner in the WIOA Unified state Plan, DRS has conducted an assessment of the needs of all individuals with disabilities as per the needs assessment section of the State Unified Plan and the requirements of the revised state plan guidance. Public vocational rehabilitation has collaborated with their WIOA program partners in this assessment and subsequent planning process to assure that the workforce needs of the state to include individuals with disabilities was addressed.

The 2020 Triennial Needs assessment was constructed around the guidelines of the Rehabilitation Services Administration's six steps to assessing and addressing VR Needs. The executive process was developed in collaboration

with the DRS Board of Vocational Services and established both goals and process for the CSNA. The summary of the process is below:

1. Review of key data and service narrative points generated from latest available federal program year to establish if there exists any need for revisions of previous CSNA findings.
2. Supplement the CSNA to establish a new baseline of need and strategy regarding Transition services and other needs relative to the new and additional requirements of WIOA.
3. Work directly with the South Dakota Workforce Council to identify the service and program needs expand the infrastructure required by enhanced mission, goals, and strategies of WIOA.
4. Revise in collaboration with the South Dakota Boards (SRCs) the VR Portion of the Unified State Plan to reflect both the new WIOA emphasis, the service needs of South Dakota individuals with disabilities, and finally adjust the goals and strategies as necessary.

Source Reports and Data (Base 2019 CSNA Documentation)

1. DRS Data Summary
2. DRS/SBVI Field Needs Assessment
3. Governor's Task Force On Employing People with Disabilities
4. DRS 2019 Staff CSNA Survey of Needs
5. South Dakota DRS Board Meeting Minutes (2017-19)
6. SBVI/DRS Consumer Satisfaction with Vocational Rehabilitation Services
7. South Dakota Indicator 14 2018 Report/South Dakota Department of Education
8. WIOA Primary Performance Indicators

Source Reports and Data (Key Data and service narrative bridge analysis conducted in 2017/19)

1. DRS: Agency Year End Data (Board Report),
2. Consumer Satisfaction Surveys
3. South Dakota Department of Human Services Mission and Strategic Plan
4. South Dakota Office of Special Education Indicator 14 Results
5. South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation Annual Workforce Reports
6. American Community Survey Data

(A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

"Individual with a Most Significant Disability" means an individual with a disability who meets the criteria for having a significant disability and in addition has serious limits in two or more functional capacities (such as, but not limited to, mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome. Individuals who meet the criteria for this Priority Level I category are determined to be individuals with the "Most Significant Disability". The needs identified for this category were as follows:

1. Administrative Infrastructure

The highest weighted category of needs for this group was Administrative Infrastructure. This category of need represents requests from the line of service (consumers/counselors) state leaders (Directors and Administrators) and VR Management for policy enhancements or clarifications, additional resources, or expertise to meet the needs of persons with the most significant disabilities. What ties these needs together is the common request for broader systems change both intra and inter agency. Fueling this category of need is the increasing complexity of need and service required for the most significantly disabled individuals who are leaving sheltered employment. The need for systems enhancement in this service area was expressed by school officials, VR field staff, and management/leadership.

2. Additional Community Rehabilitation Program/Provider Options

The needs of this group were predominately focused on the capacity of Vocational Rehabilitation to expand their service capacity to serve persons with the most significant disabilities through the provider network. Again, as in Administrative Infrastructure, pressures on this dimension of service are being compounded by the need to move from sheltered work services and the need to develop a range of longer term supports resources. Deeply rural

communities describe the need to find providers with the necessary skills to address the complexities of service needs for this group and to provide an expanded range of vocational options. Finally related to this category is the overall higher incidence of expressed service needs for persons with most significant Behavioral Health disabilities concentrated in rural counties.

3. Disability Specific Training

The needs of persons in this group generated requests for more deeply trained provider staff in areas such as autism spectrum, brain injury, and behavioral health. The need for behavioral health specific expertise arose in this group primarily in the context of co-occurring disabilities.

4. Transitions Cooperative Agreement

Data and commentary pointed to a need to strengthen the referral track between schools and VR adult services. This also included reaching students and families with education about transitions and adult services. This need is exacerbated by turn over of staff particularly in schools.

5. Job Development/Placement

This category revealed perceived needs for more job placement services, job coaches, frequently references specific rural placement challenges. In this category of need are a number of statements that could have also easily been categorized in the Public Outreach/Education as the reporters often included a need for outreach and education from the VR service sector to the employment sector.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has been proactive in promoting quality supported employment services. Service providers who have obtained their Certified Employment Support Professional Certification are funded at a higher reimbursement rate. These providers are required to attend 36 hours of training every 3 years to continue their certification. The Division has been providing these training sessions through a variety of methods such as conferences, webinars or workshop sessions.

The Division has implemented a significant training initiative to develop customized employment in South Dakota. This initiative has a four phase implementation plan that will eventually provide training to all Developmental Disability agencies and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

(B) who are minorities;

DRS reviewed data, inquired through the DRS Board and surveyed staff regarding possible underservice for individuals with disabilities with particular attention on assessing any unmet needs of individuals who are members of minority communities.

	2017	2018	2019	State Pop
White	77%	75%	76%	85%
American Indian or Alaska Native	14%	15%	14%	9%
Black or African American	4%	4%	4%	2%
Two or more races	4%	4%	4%	8%
Asian	1%	1%	1%	1%
Did not self-identify race		1%	1%	

The surveys/interviews conducted for the CSNA surfaced these needs and concerns:

1. **Language Culture and Public Education:** While data revealed a proportionate response to population, narrative responses emphasized the need for staff, employer and public education activities and events that addressed language and communication, cultural sensitivity and training. Also described were immigrant attitudes and fears regarding 'government services' and the difficulty previous immigrant experiences presented in referral finding and service. Significantly this set of responses regarding minorities is become more diversified particularly in larger communities such as Sioux Falls with growing immigrant communities. In the data sets many immigrant groups are likely to be statistically underrepresented. Respondents expressed an increased awareness that the success of VR services is contingent on public awareness and willingness to work with minorities and immigrants.
2. **Behavioral Health** and services to very rural communities combined created a perception at different levels of the assessment that individuals in rural communities were likely to be underserved based on the lack of specialized supports. Human services management/leaders expressed a particular desire to strengthen the response for this

group. This need interacts in the responses with cultural sensitivity and the desire to better serve Native Americans in the rural reservations in the area of behavioral health.

(C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

The surveys/interviews conducted for the CSNA surfaced these needs and concerns.

1. **Behavioral Health** and services to very rural communities combined created a perception at different levels of the assessment that individuals in rural communities were likely to be underserved based on the lack of specialized supports. Human services management/leaders expressed a particular desire to strengthen the response for this group. This need interacts in the responses with cultural sensitivity and the desire to better serve Native Americans in the rural reservations in the area of behavioral health.
2. **Rural Service Access/Economy:** The underserved and hard to serve frequently live in sparsely populated counties covering large geographic areas and far from metro areas. These deep rural parts of the state tend to impact everyone living there regardless of race and ethnicity. The logistics of service delivery and the economy of scale play a large role and the outcome of this needs assessment pointed toward the need for interagency and public policy/resource to address these seemingly intractable barriers for rural populations.
3. **Transportation Services:** Although transportation scored 4th in the weight of responses, transportation is unquestionable one of the overall most frequent needs distributed across all the sectors of service delivery. Because transportation was often coupled with issues in rural areas, infrastructure needs, and interagency cooperation this service need remains a serious service need for people with disabilities including most significantly disabled.
4. **Administrative Infrastructure:** Respondents looked to the agencies to develop more resources and techniques to more effectively respond to the underserved, hard to serve and/or minority groups. Particularly line-of-service respondents felt their tools were limited or scope of service was too constricted to effectively deal with such problems of economy, housing or the basics of subsistence. Interagency cooperative services (particularly in rural areas) were brought up with some frequency.

(D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

The Division of Rehabilitation Services and DLR share a commitment to serving individuals with disabilities in their goals for employment. Over the course of the needs assessment it became clear the partners work together to educate regarding their shared mission providing information and education to the public and employers regarding disability disclosure, workplace accommodations, Universal Design, the ADA, the Workforces Diversity Network of the Black Hills, Business Resource Network, Dakotalink and assistive technology. That said, the needs assessment also pointed to areas that may need attention in the upcoming years.

Administrative Infrastructure: The results of surveys predominately placed the focus more on the service delivery system's capacities and less on discrete individual needs of person's with disabilities. People described the importance of continued improvement in teamwork, communication and networking between the partners of the network. Continued improvement in data sharing and cross walking to help improve the consumer experience was articulated at leadership and line of service levels. At the DRS Board level there was a recommendation for expanded consumer participation in the administration of the system.

Skilled Employment Training: Job carving, customized employment, specific skill training for providing customer service in the tourism/hotel industries were articulated as needs that might be addressed through Work Force Partners. Respondents requested exploring linkage to support Project skills in serving youth.

Employer Education and Support: Respondents discussed the need for more coordinated employer contacts in small communities to avoid duplication. They also promoted education provided to employers to better understand the assets people with disabilities can be to their businesses.

Employment Related Skills: Respondents did articulate continuing need for direct employment skills training which historically may have been considered vocational technical skills with shorter specialized skills curriculums in terms of time. This survey surfaced expressions of need for job carving for persons with more complex disabilities and customer service training including soft skills for access to the service sector of employment.

OJT/Apprenticeship: Both On-the-Job training and Apprenticeship programs surfaced as needed and valued services that could be enhanced through the Workforce system.

(E) who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

Youth with disabilities are defined as individuals with disabilities between the age of 14 and 24 (under 25). Students with disabilities are defined as individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and under 21 as of July 1st; and enrolled in a secondary school receiving services under an Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan. Students with disabilities can receive Pre-Employment Transition Services without applying for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) are required, in collaboration with the local educational agencies, to provide, or arrange for the provision of, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for all students with disabilities in need of such services without regard to the type of disability from VR funds reserved for this purpose.

State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies are required to set aside 15% of the Federal Award each year to provide the Required and Coordination of Pre-Employment Transition Services. The remaining balance can be utilized for Authorized Activities. These categories are explained below. In addition, Pre-ETS may be provided to all students with disabilities, regardless if they have applied for VR services. These students with disabilities who have not applied are recorded as Presumed Eligible (PE) in VRFACES.

Calculation of 15% Reserve Funds for FFY 2020

- I. Total Number of Students with disabilities in South Dakota
Using Special Ed data for SFY 2019
2748 on IEP
749 on 504 Plans
3497 Total Students with Disabilities ages 16-21
- II. Determine the number of students with disabilities who need Pre-ETS
Using VR data, 1234 students with disabilities were in the VR FACES for SFY 2019
- III. Calculate the cost for the provision of Pre-ETS
\$1,638,380.13 needed for Pre-ETS
- IV. Calculate the amount of funds reserved for the provision of Pre-ETS
DRS & SBVI FFY 2020 Award is \$11,107,868.00
15% is \$1,666,180.20
- V. Set Aside Amount
\$27,800.07

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

The term Community Rehabilitation Provider or CRP is falling out of common usage in terms of how we articulate that extension of VR services through professionals outside the formal VR system and whose services are linked with VR by the IPE. What is expressed below combines references to CRP and also language referring to the external provider system that, in formal coordination with VR, provide services to individuals with disabilities in South Dakota.

- **Additional CRP Provider Services:** This category contains frequent references to the need for more providers and more choices for consumers among providers. There were also frequent requests for more providers qualified to provide customized employment services and more placement capacity, particularly outside the metro areas.
- **Behavioral Health Providers:** Behavioral health requests targeted the need for more specialized counseling, and case management services with a strong emphasis in rural areas. Related to this category was the need for

resources and investments leading to longer term support providers in rural behavioral health services.

- **Rural Access/Economy:** This category in this context is a straightforward request for more providers in rural areas, and underlying this request is a described need to deal with the rural economy of scale which makes it economically difficult to field placement staff in sparsely populated areas.
- **Administrative Infrastructure:** In the rural provider context this represents a request for individual and collective agencies to use interagency leverage to generate both the design and resources to field more placement and support providers in service to people with disabilities.
- **Transportation:** In this context the requests were related to generating unique provider-based models of the transportation services for persons with disabilities in both rural and urban areas.

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Transitions Cooperative Agreement: Requests for training in bridge programs between VR and Schools in the areas of public policy, parental rights and responsibilities for transition age youth/students. Ongoing tuning of interagency service scopes in cooperative agreements in support of transitioning students.

Administrative Infrastructure and Services: The CSNA feedback regarding transitions was a blend of discrete service needs and administrative level issues. In terms of administrative needs, both data and survey comments point the need for ongoing training for professionals in the areas of public policy and systems coordination. Comments also pointed to the need for parents to receive ongoing information and training in assisting their children through the transitions process. These needs are increased in their intensity by continuous personnel changes in the schools as well as the staffing changes that occur in VR offices. The data addressing the numbers in VR School connections suggest the need for the adult systems to focus on refining efforts in this arena

There was also commentary on the need for more consistent supports to level the quality of services across the state and possibly more Work Force partner involvement earlier in the student's transition. Finally, while there was much praise and support for Project Skills, there was also growing support of customized employment and the possibility of enhanced waiver support to customize employment.

k) Annual Estimates. Describe:

(1) The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

According to the US Census Bureau's 2020 American Community Survey, an estimated 26,828 working age people with disabilities live in South Dakota. This constitutes 6.5% of the state's overall working age population.

During Program Year 2021 the Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) estimates that the following outcomes will be accomplished based on prior year's data and service projections:

Title I, Vocational Rehabilitation — A total of 2,500 eligible clients will be served at a case service cost of \$4,200,000.

Title VI Part B Supported Employment — A total of 700 eligible clients will be served at a case service cost of \$300,000.00. If these funds are not available, then Title I funds will be used.

(2) The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

(A) The VR Program;

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Division has seen a decline in the number of individuals with disabilities applying for Vocational Rehabilitation services. It is estimated with the economy recovering, that the Division will continue to see a gradual increase of applicants in Program Years 2021 and 2022. It is estimated that the Division will have 1,746 new eligible individuals in Program Year 2021 with anticipated continued increase in applicants and eligible individuals in Program Year 2022. Efforts are currently being made to increase outreach attempts and increase availability/variety of services to meet the needs of more individuals or those that may have been underserved in the past.

(B) The Supported Employment Program; and

Supported employment is when an individual with the most significant disability is working in the community in an

integrated setting above minimum wage alongside individuals who do not have disabilities. Supported employment is receiving the training at the job site and having available the necessary ongoing supports to help maintain the employment. The total number of clients for supported employment in Program Year 2020 was 650 clients and estimated for Program Year 2021 is 700 clients.

(C) each priority category, if under an order of selection.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is not in an order of selection.

(3) The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

All eligible individuals are currently being served.

(4) The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

The Division is currently serving all eligible individuals and is not in an order of selection. For Program Year 2021 the Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) estimates that the following outcomes will be accomplished based on prior year's data and service projections:

- **Title I, Vocational Rehabilitation** — A total of 2,500 eligible clients will be served at a case service cost of \$4,200,000.
- **Title VI Part B Supported Employment** — A total of 700 eligible clients will be served at a case service cost of \$300,000.00. If these funds are not available, then Title I funds will be used.

South Dakota's annual allotment of Title VI-B funds is \$300,000. Over 97.5% of the Title VI-B funds are spent for consumer services. The state spends less than 2.5% of its allotment of Title VI-B funds for administrative costs. Half of the Supported Employment federal funds plus 10% match are designated for youth with disabilities. Supported employment funds are not expended until individuals with disabilities have been determined eligible for the 110 Vocational Rehabilitation Program and employed. Supported Employment services are purchased by the vocational rehabilitation counselors through an authorization system. Expenditures exceeding the Title VI-B allotment are covered with funds from the 110 Program. Supported employment funds will be authorized for approved providers of the consumer's choice. The amount of funds authorized will be based upon the individual's needs, type of placement, hours and type of employment.

I) State Goals and Priorities. *The designated State unit must:*

(1) Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division or DRS) mission is to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain good jobs, economic self-sufficiency, personal independence, and full inclusion into the community. To accomplish this mission, the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division have jointly developed the Goals and Priorities listed below. These goals will be developed based on the analysis of the comprehensive statewide assessment; performance of Division's accomplishment in meeting the standards and indicators; and public input.

(2) Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

- Goal 1: Students and youth will enter their adult lives capable of self-advocacy with sufficient experience to make choices about work and career, being appropriately supported and living as independently as possible.
- Goal 2: DRS will facilitate the development of a strong statewide community with partnerships with workforce systems, businesses, State Government, tribal systems, schools, service providers and service organizations.
- Goal 3: DRS clients will have access to transportation services needed to obtain and maintain employment.
- Goal 4: The VR Service delivery system will result in enhanced earnings, employee benefits, retention and career advancement for DRS clients.
- Goal 5: DRS clients will have the skills, motivation and supports necessary to make an informed choice for successful daily living, employment, money management, personal and work relationships.

(3) Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

These goals were developed based on the analysis of the comprehensive statewide assessment; performance of Division's accomplishment in meeting the standards and indicators; and public input.

(A) *the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;*

These goals were developed based on the analysis of the comprehensive statewide assessment; performance of Division's accomplishment in meeting the standards and indicators; and public input.

(B) *the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and*

These goals were developed based on DRS meeting performance accountability measures of WIOA.

(C) *other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.*

These goals were developed based on the analysis of the comprehensive statewide assessment; performance of Division's accomplishment in meeting the standards and indicators; and public input.

m) Order of Selection. Describe:

(1) *Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:*

(A) *The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is able to serve all individuals and is not in an order of selection.

(B) *The justification for the order.*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is able to serve all individuals and is not in an order of selection.

(C) *The service and outcome goals.*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is able to serve all individuals and is not in an order of selection.

(D) *The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.; and*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is able to serve all individuals and is not in an order of selection.

(E) *How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is able to serve all individuals and is not in an order of selection.

(2) *If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.*

The Division of Rehabilitation Services is able to serve all individuals and is not in an order of selection.

n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds

(1) *Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.*

The South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) is committed to ensuring that rehabilitation services are made available on a statewide basis to individuals with the most severe disabilities who have not traditionally been competitively employed or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent. These services are available through the Supported Employment Program.

South Dakota's annual allotment of Title VI-B funds is \$300,000. \$150,000 of this grant award is used for Vocational Rehabilitation clients who are considered youth. This \$150,000 is matched with 10% state funds. Over 97.5% of the Title VI-B funds are spent for consumer services. The state spends less than 2.5% of its allotment of Title VI-B funds for administrative costs. Supported employment funds are not expended until individuals with disabilities have been determined eligible for the 110 Vocational Rehabilitation Program and are employed. Supported Employment services are purchased by the vocational rehabilitation counselors through an authorization system. Expenditures exceeding the

Title VI-B allotment are covered with funds from the 110 Program.

The Division will continue to expend over 97.5% of the Title VI-B funds on direct services for supported employment consumers. Supported employment expenditures exceeding the Federal allotment will continue to be paid from the 110 Vocational Rehabilitation funds. Supported employment funds will be authorized for approved providers of the consumer's choice. The amount of funds authorized will be based upon the individual's needs, type of placement, hours and type of employment. Supported Employment funds can only be used for job coaching and follow-along services.

During the next program year, the Division plans to distribute the Title VI-B funds through the fee for service system as traditionally done in previous years. This allows for Vocational Rehabilitation clients who have greater needs to receive the level of services necessary to help them obtain supported employment. The Division will continue outcome-based contracts with mental health centers for supported employment services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. This contract model has encouraged the mental health centers to provide supported employment services and is a more accessible method of supported employment services for these consumers. These initiatives will help promote the employment of individuals with the most severe disabilities.

Supported employment clients rehabilitated successfully for Program Years were:

Program Year	Total Successful Rehabilitated Closures	Total Successful Rehabilitated Closures who were Supported Employment
2020	474	119
2019	515	142
2018	628	169

(2) Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including :

(A) the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

Extended services will be available for youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 4 years with other entities providing long term supports after that time period. With the addition of Customized Employment as an available service, this will better serve youth that may not have been well-served by more traditional services.

(B) how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

Medicaid waiver funds are available for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities through the public-school system and Medicaid waiver services.

o) State's Strategies. *Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):*

(1) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

The Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Rehabilitation Services established the strategies to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain good jobs, economic self-sufficiency, personal independence, and full inclusion into the community. The strategies listed below are key steps in accomplishing these goals.

- Strategy 1.1: Coordinate vocational rehabilitation services for clients who are attending post-secondary programs.
- Strategy 1.2: Increase and strengthen transition services for eligible students who are exploring their employment future.
- Strategy 1.3: Implement outreach and informed choice strategies to include strategies to enhance effective communication for youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Strategy 1.4: Conduct outreach activities for teachers, students with disabilities and their family members to provide information on vocational rehabilitation services.

- Strategy 1.5: Increase and strengthen transition services for students who are Native American or other minorities with disabilities exploring employment future.
- Strategy 1.6: Increase the availability of Pre-Employment Transition Services to school districts across the State.
- Strategy 1.7: Increase the number of applicants and service delivery for transition services for students with disabilities prior to age 16.
- Strategy 2.1: Increase the service capacity and quality of services delivered through the service providers.
- Strategy 2.2: To maintain and expand partnerships with the business community.
- Strategy 2.3: To maintain and expand partnerships with organizations serving Native Americans and other minorities with disabilities.
- Strategy 2.4: To maintain and expand working relationships with entities, agencies, and organizations to enhance the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to underserved rural areas.
- Strategy 2.5: To maintain and expand the extended services for assuring successful employment for supported employment clients.
- Strategy 2.6: State Government will be a model employer in increasing the employment of people with disabilities in State Government.
- Strategy 3.1: Increase knowledge of the available transportation systems and compatibility with the employment systems.
- Strategy 3.2: Promote the participation with disability agencies, local communities and workforce partners to improve transportation services.
- Strategy 3.3: Expand transportation options for Vocational Rehabilitation clients with a focus in rural areas and underserved populations.
- Strategy 4.1: Improve the employment retention of Vocational Rehabilitation clients.
- Strategy 4.2: Increase the knowledge base and understanding of supports and services for people with mental illness by VR staff, providers and businesses.
- Strategy 4.3: Increase awareness and referrals to Benefits Specialists services for VR clients.
- Strategy 4.4: Increase the knowledge base and understanding of the Ticket to Work initiatives for Social Security beneficiaries, VR staff, providers and businesses.
- Strategy 4.5: Increase work experience opportunities for adults with disabilities with a focus on individuals with mental illness, those living in rural areas and underserved populations.
- Strategy 4.6: Continue in the development and increase utilization of vocational skills training for individuals with disabilities in South Dakota.
- Strategy 5.1: Provide training on strategies and tools for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to assist VR clients to reach their employment goal.
- Strategy 5.2: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors will utilize counseling strategies and tools for assessing critical strengths and barriers to enhance the client's personal life status and employment skills.
- Strategy 5.3: Expand provider supports for life skills development.
- Strategy 5.4: Increase awareness, supports and the utilization of self-employment as an employment outcome for VR clients.

(2) How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services makes assistive technology available to our Vocational Rehabilitation clients during each stage of the rehabilitation process. The primary provider of assistive technology in South Dakota is Dakota Link. This provider has AT resource areas throughout the state and they provide AT assessment for VR applications and clients. Many of the DLR One-Stop Career Centers have resource rooms available and have computers with assistive devices for individuals with disabilities.

(3) The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities

In 2017, the Census Bureau estimated that 82.3% of South Dakotans were White, 8.6% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 3.6% were Hispanic or Latino, 1.9% were Black or African American and 1.2% were Asian. Native Americans represent the largest minority group in South Dakota. South Dakota has nine reservations with autonomous governing

bodies. Collectively they represent the Great Sioux Nation and share a common culture and language. Typically, these reservations are very rural, isolated, with high poverty, and high unemployment rates. Nearly half of all Native Americans in South Dakota live on reservations.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors who serve each of the reservation areas. These VR Counselors meet with local Indian Health Services and tribal government staff to identify potential referrals. Generally, staff work out of tribal offices when meeting with applicants/clients on living on the reservation. Native Americans living on reservations face unique challenges. First, they are eligible for a combination of tribal, federal and state programs to meet their vocational and health care needs. This requires extensive coordination and cooperation between agencies. Secondly, they are faced with significant cultural and economic barriers. Unemployment on South Dakota's reservations varies from 70 % to 89%. There is very little private employment. Most individuals are employed by either tribal or federal governments.

South Dakota is fortunate to have six American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Programs (AIVRS). These programs have greatly improved access to vocational rehabilitation services for those Native Americans served by these AIVRS Programs. The Division has established an on- going working relationship with each of the programs. We have assigned a VR Counselor to work with each Project to assist them in program development. Native American clients living on reservations have the choice of either being served by the AIVRS, the state unit or jointly by both programs. We encourage clients to be served either by the AIVRS Program or jointly by both projects. The AIVRS Programs have a better grasp of the cultural and the service delivery barriers that exist on reservations. The state agency has access to specialized programs and services which are not feasible for an AIVRS Program to maintain. On those reservations where an AIVRS Program exists, the Division does not plan to conduct extensive outreach activities. This function can more effectively be conducted by the AIVRS Programs. Our efforts will be to network with the AIVRS Programs to ensure that Native American clients have access to the full range of vocational rehabilitation services. DRS has a formal cooperative agreement with each AIVRS Program.

A number of Native American client organizations have developed in the state. The Division works closely with these organizations to identify special needs and strategies to meet these needs. Working in conjunction with the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Division has expanded its financial support for these organization. These organization have local liaisons on each reservation that refer directly to vocational rehabilitation. Both the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Independent Living Council have Native American representation. These individuals provide guidance and consultation to the Division on policy issues affecting Native Americans.

(4) The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

- Strategy 1.1: Coordinate vocational rehabilitation services for clients who are attending post-secondary programs.
- Strategy 1.2: Increase and strengthen transition services for eligible students who are exploring their employment future.
- Strategy 1.3: Implement outreach and informed choice strategies to include strategies to enhance effective communication for youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Strategy 1.4: Conduct outreach activities for teachers, students with disabilities and their family members to provide information on vocational rehabilitation services.
- Strategy 1.5: Increase and strengthen transition services for students who are Native American or other minorities with disabilities exploring employment future.
- Strategy 1.6: Increase the availability of Pre-Employment Transition Services to school districts across the State.
- Strategy 1.7: Increase the number of applicants and service delivery for transition services for students with disabilities prior to age 16.

(5) If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

- Strategy 2.1: Increase the service capacity and quality of services delivered through the service providers.
- Strategy 2.4: To maintain and expand working relationships with entities, agencies, and organizations to enhance the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to underserved rural areas.
- Strategy 2.5: To maintain and expand the extended services for assuring successful employment for supported employment clients.
- Strategy 4.2: Increase the knowledge base and understanding of supports and services for people with mental illness by VR staff, providers and businesses.
- Strategy 4.3: Increase awareness and referrals to Benefits Specialists services for VR clients.
- Strategy 4.4: Increase the knowledge base and understanding of the Ticket to Work initiatives for Social Security beneficiaries, VR staff, providers and businesses.
- Strategy 5.3: Expand provider supports for life skills development.

(6) Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has provided training to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors on quarterly reporting of Measurable Skills Gains. The case management system (VR FACES) has a quarterly processing procedure to assist VR Counselors to report on their clients.

(7) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

- Strategy 2.4: To maintain and expand working relationships with entities, agencies, and organizations to enhance the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to underserved rural areas.
- Strategy 2.6: State Government will be a model employer in increasing the employment of people with disabilities in State Government.
- Strategy 3.2: Promote the participation with disability agencies, local communities and workforce partners to improve transportation services.

(8) How the agency's strategies will be used to:

(A) achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

The Division will work with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation to measure and report progress on goals and priorities, including those needs identified in the statewide needs assessment.

(B) support innovation and expansion activities; and

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has reserved a budgeted amount for the utilization of the Innovation and Expansion. These funds will be used for the following activities:

- Support the cost of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation. This includes staff cost, accommodations and other direct costs involved in VR Board activities.
- Support the cost of the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). This includes staff cost, accommodations and other direct costs involved in SILC activities.
- Support initiatives approved by the Board of VR to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment and goals and priorities of the State.
- Support the functions of the VR Board as described in Section 105 (c) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Support the establishment, development and improvement of community rehabilitation programs.
- Support improvement in service provision as measured through standards and indicators.
- Support initiatives to assist partners in the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

(C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

The Division has been very proactive in overcoming barriers for applicants and clients to access and participate in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs. Following is a list of key activities implemented to assure equitable access:

- All District Offices are in accessible locations.
- All District Offices have a Z phone available for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Three District Offices have purchased Ubiduo communication devices for office staff to communicate with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- All DRS public meetings are held in locations that are physically accessible to people with disabilities.
- All applicants and clients are informed that alternative formats for information (Braille, electronic, large print, and auxiliary aids and reasonable accommodations) are available upon request for all Division events.
- The Division makes special efforts to provide interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, individuals who speak foreign languages, and individuals who speak Lakota, Dakota or Nakota.
- The Division participates in a “Loss Control Committee”. The purpose of this committee is to evaluate the accessibility and safety issues of all area offices.
- The Division’s Internet Home Page is accessible for individuals with disabilities who may be using assistive devices to access the information. The home page was evaluated for accessibility utilizing an application called “Bobby Approved”.
- The Division has implemented a policy to coordinate referrals for the provision of statewide assistive technology devices and services to ensure clients can overcome barriers they encounter during the rehabilitation process.
- The Division administers a telecommunication adaptive devices (TAD) program for free distribution of accessible telephone equipment to South Dakota residents with disabilities.
- The Division administers a telecommunication equipment distribution (TED) program for free distribution of accessible telephone equipment to South Dakota residents who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Division staff are working with all partners in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act offices to assure physical access, program access and services access.

p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. Describe:

(1) An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

Goal 1: Students and youth will enter their adult lives capable of self-advocacy with sufficient experience to make choices about work and career, being appropriately supported and living as independently as possible.

Strategy 1.1: Coordinate vocational rehabilitation services for clients who are attending post-secondary programs.

DRS sponsors an annual meeting/training for the South Dakota post-secondary disability coordinators. This training promotes the coordination of services for individuals with disabilities. On May 20, 2020, thirty-one people attended, eight of which were from vocational institutes and college universities. The annual event was held virtually. A new video was created where the disability coordinators provided tips to students, families and teachers on what to expect for accommodations when they get to post-secondary level.

DRS collaborated with eight post-secondary institutes in the state to host a virtual “Catch the Wave” event. These are one-day workshops intended for high school students planning to attend post-secondary educational opportunities. Due to a national pandemic, TSLP staff worked to develop a virtual training with help from Post-Secondary Disability Coordinators, Post-Secondary financial aid staff, and VR staff to provide the information needed for successful transition into post-secondary educational settings. The presentations were shared with teachers across the state to share with their students and parents to view.

DRS works closely with the Dakota Wesleyan University/Lifequest program in Mitchell. This program provides students with disabilities employment skills classes while also providing a post-secondary opportunity. There were

four students who have participated in the school year 2020-2021. DRS assisted with funding for 4 students to participate in Augie Access at Augustana University for the 2020-2021 school year.

DRS also works closely with Teachwell Solutions/Strive program in Sioux Falls at Southeast Technical College with starting a new post-secondary 18-21 program. The program helps students adjust to campus life and manage a personal schedule that includes college courses, career exploration, and life skills lessons. There were 4 students who participated in Stive during Program Year 2020.

Strategy 1.2: Increase and strengthen transition services for eligible students who are exploring their employment future.

The Division annually sponsors the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). YLF is a five-day event held on a college campus and provided an opportunity for thirty-five (35) high school students with disabilities, including members of ethnic and racial minority groups. The YLF assists students with disabilities explore personal leadership, career planning, develop self-advocacy skills and enhance their knowledge of the services and supports available in the transition process.

Sioux Falls DRS staff attend monthly Interagency Transition Council (ITC) meetings that include VR staff, Special Education Professionals, and Community Agency Professionals. Meetings are organized by the TSLP with various topics focusing on providing information and services for transition aged students with disabilities. DRS and the Transition Services Liaison Program (TSLP) staff attended a national transition conference virtually in 2020.

DRS staff present at school transition classes, high school classes and Independent Living training sessions. These presentations covered information about VR, employment skills, post-secondary opportunities and job searching. Rapid City DRS staff teach pre-employment classes once a week at Rapid City Area School's Transition Classroom, Workforce Development Program.

Aberdeen DRS staff teach pre-employment classes once per week at Aberdeen Central's Achieve classroom, the Transition Learning Campus classroom along with Project SEARCH. Pierre DRS staff do a bi-monthly class with their 18-21 classroom. Other DRS counselors covering rural areas also have some groups based on student age and VR client numbers.

VR Counselors regularly attend Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings and meet with students at the school and/or in their office to discuss post-secondary goals and training needs. Services are set up on an individualized basis for transition students that we are working with. Approximately 64% of individuals applying for VR services are students with disabilities on an IEP. Another 5% are students with disabilities not on an IEP.

VR Counselors utilize the World of Work Inventory (WOWI) along with other interest inventories to help students with disabilities identify their interests, values and aptitudes for certain employment considerations. VR Counselors also utilize the virtual platform, Virtual Job Shadow, to provide extensive career exploration as well as have access to a variety of career inventories to determine potential career goals. VR counselors are able to set up individual accounts for students on another virtual platform, eTrac, which provides lessons on employment soft skills. VR counselors are utilizing Virtual Job Shadow or eTrac with students with disabilities to work through the platforms in a classroom within secondary school settings to provide essential Pre-ETS.

DRS provides a work experience program, Project Skills, for students with disabilities to try various employment options. A student can receive up to 250 hours of a paid work experience during a school year. During Program Year 2020, 362 students with disabilities participated in the Project Skills program.

DRS sponsors 5 Project Search sites in South Dakota where 31 students participate during Program Year 2020. An additional Project Search site was added starting July 2020.

DRS worked closely with TSLP staff to expand the training event called “Let’s Talk About Work”. Due to a national pandemic, TSLP staff worked to develop a virtual training with help from Department of Education, local employers, and other agencies, including VR, that provide services to students with disabilities. This event is designed specifically for students who have a disability and want to learn more about careers and strategies that lead to competitive integrated employment. The presentation was shared with teachers across the state to present the materials to their students during scheduled transition/employment class time.

Since 2016, DRS and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) have offered funding opportunities to Local Education Agencies and community providers during the summertime for training opportunities relevant to Pre-ETS for students with disabilities. Areas that are required to be included in the curriculum include job exploration activities, workplace Readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and information about vocational rehabilitation services and other programs available to assist individuals with disabilities. During the summer of 2020, DRS funded 9 initiatives that focused on Pre-Employment Transition Services to high school students with disabilities. Altogether, a total of 96 participants or students were involved in the trainings, 71 are currently receiving VR services, and 25 are potentially eligible for VR services.

Strategy 1.3: Implement outreach and informed choice strategies to include strategies to enhance effective communication for youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.

DRS hosts monthly Transition Forums virtually across the state. The forums provide an opportunity for the participants to learn about and meet the various service providers in the area (ex. Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Benefits Counselors, IL Services, DD Resource Coordinators, Community Support Providers, Assistive Technology Services, etc.).

DRS has provided funding for students to attend the RIT (Rochester Institute of Technology) Summer Camp for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The one-week camp at the RIT campus focuses on informing students that are deaf or hard of hearing about career choices in the medical field.

DRS provided funding for Communication Services for the Deaf, South Dakota to offer Pre-Employment Transition Services, including mentoring and STEM activities, to six (6) students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing during a summer program.

DRS offices have purchased the UbiDuo communication machines to communicate with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. VR Counselors have also promoted various telecommunication devices for individuals to use for effective communication. DRS also utilizes the Purple application for video relay communication.

Strategy 1.4: Conduct outreach activities for teachers, students with disabilities and their family members to provide information on vocational rehabilitation services.

VR Counselors attend Parent Teachers Conferences and other open house events at schools in order to meet with students and parents regarding available VR services. VR also attends the annual Project SEARCH Open House to provide information on VR Services for students participating in the program. DRS presented at the Lighting the Way Conference at Augustana University in Sioux Falls to discuss VR services for youth on the Autism Spectrum. DRS presented at the Special Education Conference and the Adult Education Conferences annually.

DRS sponsors at least 12 transition events (Catch the Wave, Regional Forums, Let’s Talk About Work) annually through the Transition Services Liaison Project. During these events, DRS provide teachers, students and family members information on VR services. The majority of these events were held virtually during Program Year 2020 due to the national pandemic.

DRS staff implemented an outreach effort to contact Special Education Directors and 504 Coordinators in the school districts. Outreach efforts are reported quarterly to the State Office.

Strategy 1.5: Increase and strengthen transition services for students who are Native Americans or other minorities with disabilities exploring employment future.

DRS sponsors Catch the Wave events annually on at least one of the Native American Reservations. These events are beneficial for students with disabilities when considering attending post-secondary programs. VR Counselors meet directly with school districts on the reservations to promote referrals for DRS for students to receive Pre-Employment Transition Services.

DRS works closely with the 5 Tribal VR programs in South Dakota. Annual meetings are held with the Tribal VR Programs to coordinate services with eligible VR clients. Agenda topics for these annual meetings always include transition services for students with disabilities. DRS provides technical assistance to the Tribes in South Dakota to apply for Tribal VR funding to serve students with disabilities on the Reservations.

Strategy 1.6: Increase the availability of Pre-Employment Transition Services to school districts across the State.

DRS worked closely with TSLP staff to expand the training event called “Let’s Talk About Work”. Due to a national pandemic, TSLP staff worked to develop a virtual training with help from Department of Education, local employers, and other agencies that provide services to students with disabilities. This event is designed specifically for students who have a disability and want to learn more about careers and strategies that lead to competitive integrated employment. The presentation was shared with teachers across the state to share with their students during scheduled transition/employment class time.

DRS works closely with LifeScape to support the development of the Pathways to Life program, which provides a transition to adulthood for 18- to 21-year-old with mild to severe disabilities. Students with the Pathways to Life program participate in the Project Skills work experience program. The curriculum includes Pre-employment: Job-Exploration counseling, social skills, and self-advocacy; Workforce readiness: Attitude, communication, problem-solving, and professionalism; Community readiness: Accessing transportation, shopping, voting, and banking; and Domestic skills: Home care, meal planning/cooking, paying bills, and scheduling appointments. DRS also funds Project Skills work experiences for students at other 18-21 programs such as Sioux Falls Teachwell Solutions, Rapid City Workforce Development, Aberdeen Transition Learning Campus, Brookings Youth Adult Transitions Program, Mitchell Program for Adult Community Transition, Sioux Falls Community Campus, and more 18-21 programs available throughout the state.

DRS works closely with the Dakota Wesleyan University/LifeQuest program in Mitchell. This program provides students with disabilities employment skills classes while also providing a post-secondary opportunity. There were 4 students who have participated in Program Year 2020. DRS also works closely with Teachwell Solutions/Strive program in Sioux Falls to starting a new post-secondary 18-21 program. The program helps students adjust to campus life and manage a personal schedule that includes college courses, career exploration, and life skills lessons. There were 4 students who participated in Strive during Program Year 2020.

DRS provides work experience for students with disabilities to try various employment options. A student can receive up to 250 hours of a paid work experience during a school year. During Program Year 2020, 362 students with disabilities participated in the Project Skills work experience program. Rapid City DRS staff taught pre-employment classes once a week at Rapid City Area School’s Transition Classroom, Workforce Development Program.

DRS has published annual Requests for Proposals that Local Educational Agencies (LEA) and Educational Cooperatives can apply for to assist with start-up costs for establishing or expanding transition programs that service students with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 21. These programs are focusing curriculum on Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students who have finished their educational credits but need continual support for learning a variety of life skills including employment and independent living skills that will lead to competitive, integrated, community employment and are still eligible for services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). During

Program Year 2020, DRS assisted three LEAs and one educational cooperative with programing for a total of 20 students having received further Pre-ETS.

Strategy 1.7: Increase the number of applicants and service delivery for transition services for students with disabilities prior to age 16.

DRS and Transition Services Liaison Program (TSLP) staff present transition related information to college students planning to enter the special education field at the Northern State University, Augustana University, University of Sioux Falls, and Dakota Wesleyan University. DRS, TSLP and other contract staff also present to other high schools on VR services and referrals prior to 16.

TSLP staff collaborated with the State Office of Special Education Programs to provide ten (10) Individual Education Plan (IEP) workshops with a Transition focus to about one--twenty-three (123) High School special education teachers across the state. The focus of the training went beyond IEP compliance and included best practice strategies and predictors of post-high school success.

TSLP staff hosted the Transition Summer Institute, a virtual conference for high school special education teachers. One-hundred and ninety-two (192) educators and vocational rehabilitation staff registered and were able to view the presentations as time allowed. The event included various transition related topics including WIOA and Pre-employment transition services, IDEA law, charting the life course curriculum, career assessment tools, IEP development and collaboration with state and local agencies and work experience programs for youth in transition.

VR counselors attend IEP meetings at school districts starting as early as age 14. Sioux Falls VR works closely with Southeastern Behavioral Health to provide transition services for students with mental health issues.

DRS staff participated in events targeting students younger than 16 years old. These events consist of Watertown Disability Awareness Day activities for the 5th graders which enhance their understanding of disabilities and the Aberdeen Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities Barrier Awareness Day (BAD) for Aberdeen and surrounding school district 5th graders. Additionally, the Aberdeen Mayor's Advisory Committee did a special BAD day activity for Webster school district at their request. .

DRS has begun developing and distributing monthly transition newsletters that VR counselors send to potentially eligible and VR eligible students, parents, and school districts to share information about available statewide services to students with disabilities while highlighting relevant Pre-ETS. DRS has also created a Transition Resource page on the DHS website for easier access to transition related information.

Goal 2: DRS will facilitate the development of a strong statewide community with partnerships with workforce systems, businesses, State Government, tribal systems, schools, service providers and service organizations.

Strategy 2.1: Increase the service capacity and quality of services delivered through the service providers.

DRS meets monthly with WIOA Core Partners to improve collaboration between the partners. DRS also meets quarterly with other community partners to learn about and discuss topics such as low-income housing, transportation, food stamps, training programs, financial services and resources, etc. to better serve mutual clients.

DRS has developed a website to post provider resources. This website provides template forms, policies, and past training videos. DRS has also promoted providers to become Certified Employment Support Professionals (CESP) certified by the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) to be reimbursed at a higher reimbursement rate. At the end of Program Year 2018, there were 94 certified CESP providers.

DRS has funded establishment grants to expand the service capacity of service providers with 18 agencies to add 21 Employment Specialists/Job Coaches available to provide services for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

DRS has begun training on and providing Customized Employment services to meet the needs of individuals with significant barriers to help them to achieve their employment goals. This will increase the groups of people we can serve and provide them a more quality service for their needs than we were able to provide with traditional services.

DRS has also begun providing training for providers in on variety of topics to help increase skills for new providers as well as to help individuals who have already received their CESP certification maintain their certification through continuing education.

Rapid City DRS staff are members of the Workforce Connections Coalition, a group of community members (John T. Vucurevich Foundation, SD DHS DRS, SD Dept. of Labor, SD School of Mines and Technology, West River Area Health Education Center, OneHeart, and Western Dakota Technical College. The goal of the program is to promote completion of the GED, Post-Secondary Training, and Workforce Training through combining community resources.

Rapid City DRS staff are members of the Joint Partnership Group, a group of professionals from SD DRS DHS, SD DLR, Career Learning Center and Western Dakota Technical College. The goal of the program is to promote the combining of information, resources and blending of funds to ensure Post-Secondary training and employment are successful for community members.

Rapid City DRS staff are members of OneHeart's Partner Provider Agency, members consist of DHS DRS, Youth and Family Services, Lutheran Social Services, Women Against Violence, National Alliance for Mental Illness, John T. Vucurevich Foundation, Behavior Management System, SD DLR, Pennington County, Career Learning Center and numerous other community providers. The purpose of the OneHeart transformation campus is to elevate the human spirit and the spirit of the Rapid City community. By providing transitional housing and co-locating a variety of services - from addiction and mental health counseling to life skills and job training – services can more efficiently, effectively, and collectively help our neighbors without homes move into permanent housing and a better quality of life.

Strategy 2.2: To maintain and expand partnerships with the business community.

DRS has established a single point-of-contact at the state level to establish and maintain partnerships with businesses by offering customized assistance or support. In addition, DRS contracts with two nonprofit entities in two communities in the state to provide local assistance, support, and training to businesses (form of a business-led model/initiative) in which each of them has a full-time executive director. -

- Since 2015, DRS has maintained a partnership with the SD Retailers Association (SDRA) in which has created several collaboration opportunities. During the spring of 2021, DRS, Business Resource Network (BRN), Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills (WDBH), and SDRA co-sponsored a two-part virtual statewide training series in which the Rocky Mountain ADA Center (RMADC) conducted the training. The training topics addressed service animals in workplaces and embracing disability etiquette and awareness into the workplace culture. The service animals training was held on March 23rd in which 78 individuals participated, and the disability etiquette one took place on April 14th in which 78 individuals also participated. Training participants included businesses, vocational rehabilitation staff, community agencies, and providers. DRS has also recently collaborated with SDRA and is requested assistance with training on website accessibility and disability etiquette in customer service for businesses. RMADC will be conducting two virtual trainings in the spring of 2022, which the website accessibility training is scheduled for March 22nd and the disability etiquette training is scheduled for April 11th. The training will be offered statewide to all businesses, which will once again be co-sponsored by DRS, SDRA, BRN, and WDBH.

Since the beginning of February 2021, DRS, the Business Resource Network (BRN), and the Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills (WDBH) have co-hosted statewide WINDMILLS trainings. The WINDMILLS training is a highly interactive training that empowers and equips employment professionals to help businesses through virtual and in-person trainings to become more inclusive of individuals with disabilities in the workplace. These trainings are very informative for businesses, vocational rehabilitation staff, providers, and others on becoming more familiar with

various types of disabilities, reasonable accommodations, and other topics relevant to workplaces. For PY 2020, a total of 3 WINDMILLS trainings were provided. For PY 2021, currently 7 WINDMILLS trainings have been held with more scheduled in which the next one will occur on January 18, 2022.

Project SEARCH is a unique business-led transition program for students with disabilities who want to work by giving them the chance to explore careers and develop transferable job skills. The goal of the Project SEARCH program is competitive, community employment for each participating student. South Dakota currently has five sites throughout the state and DRS partners with five different host businesses who allow participants' internship opportunities within their business.

DRS - personnel i- are members of local Human Resources groups and Chamber of Commerce -in local communities- for outreach and partnership opportunities with businesses. -

DRS and the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation sponsor annual trainings in observation of National Disability Employment Awareness Month in which are held in several communities throughout the state. The events are promoted to businesses and the public, which also promote the hiring and retention of people with disabilities. Traditionally, the events are held in-person; however, due to the CO-VID 19 pandemic, the 2020 training events were all held virtually in which there were 6 altogether. Twelve (12) training events were held in October 2021, in which were held in-person, virtually, and/or hybrid options due to the continuation of the pandemic.

DRS also conducts outreach to businesses by attending business-related events held throughout the state. For example, -had a booth during the State Society of Human Resource Management Annual Conference that was held - September 15-17, 2021.

In collaboration with the Business Resource Network of Sioux Falls (BRN), Sioux Falls District Provider Meetings are held a minimum of six times per year (every other month) to introduce providers to community employers, discuss strategies for increasing the hiring of individuals with disabilities, and learn about community employment opportunities. Meetings are typically one hour in length, with 1 CESP credit awarded for certified providers in attendance. DRS is tracking the number of services and supports being provided to employers. For PY20, the division served a total of 453 businesses, a 40% increase from the 182 businesses served in PY19. Of those served in PY20, 56 business have been receiving services from DRS for more than 1 year.

Strategy 2.3: To maintain and expand partnerships with organizations serving Native Americans and other minorities with disabilities.

VR Counselors actively work with Tribal VR programs in their area and have regular schedules at the Tribal VR offices. Through these connections, VR Counselors maintain active and positive relationships within those communities. DRS continues to meet at least annually with all five Tribal VR Programs. DRS VR Counselors and State Office staff participate in meetings on the Native American Reservations with individual Tribal VR Programs and events such as catch the wave, regional forums or public listening sessions. Each Tribal VR program has a VR Counselor assigned to their programs.

DRS staff have also assisted 2 Tribes in submitting proposals for Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation funding. One of these was approved for funding increasing the number to 6 Tribal VR Programs in South Dakota.

DRS contracted with the Oyate' Circle at the Center for Disabilities in providing disability awareness trainings on the Reservations. All the Division staff attended this training. DRS helped in the Independent Living system receive funding for independent living services on the 9 reservations.

The Aberdeen District staff is a member of the Aberdeen Area Diversity Coalition. The Aberdeen District Supervisor is also the Diversity Chair for the local Society of Human Resource Managers. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

work closely with Lutheran Social Services to assist clients with ESL classes, citizenship classes and other ways to increase their language skills to increase their employability.

Strategy 2.4: To maintain and expand working relationships with entities, agencies, and organizations to enhance the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to underserved rural areas.

DRS has developed contacts in rural communities where some have evolved into regular interagency meetings in rural communities.

DRS staff work closely with the Oyate' Circle at the Center for Disabilities in providing disability awareness trainings on the Reservations. DRS staff also participate on the Department of Labor Youth Council that establishes relationships in rural areas to promote education and employment.

DRS has developed rates and policy to provide increase compensation for providers and agencies agreeing to serve rural and underserved areas.

Strategy 2.5: To maintain and expand the extended services for assuring successful employment for supported employment clients.

DRS annually sponsors an "Employment and Benefits" workshop in Aberdeen designed for students in transition, parents, teachers, and adult service providers working with youth entering the employment arena. The workshop covers topics such as the age 18-redetermination process, section 301, SSI work incentives, how SSI payments are calculated, and the difference between Title II and Title XVI of the Social Security Act.

DRS local offices work closely with Community Support Providers to strengthen employment outcomes to include job coaching and related services. This partnership also includes development of plans for sustaining employment for individuals who are Social Security recipients.

DRS participates in the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) with the Division of Developmental Disabilities. This initiative includes redefining policies and services to support the extended employment services for people with significant disabilities.

DRS has funded establishment grants to expand the service capacity of service providers with 18 agencies to add 21 Employment Specialists/Job Coaches available to provide services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. DRS has funded grants to Community Support Providers to develop their expertise in Customized Employment. DRS has completed contracts with about half of CSP's in South Dakota to cover training expenses for providers interested in learning about and providing Customized Employment Services in South Dakota. This will allow providers to provide a more individualized service appropriate for individuals with more significant needs that have not been well-served by traditional services.

Strategy 2.6: State Government will be a model employer in increasing the employment of people with disabilities in State Government.

The State of South Dakota extends disability preference, or disability consideration, to applicants with disabilities certified by a VR counselor, which has been available for several years as an option. Having disability preference entitles the applicant to an interview (phone or in-person) on civil service positions found in the Executive branch of state government. This process consists of DRS personnel informing clients of this option, when expressing interest in applying for state government employment opportunities, and as part of the informed choice process will complete a Disability Preference Request Letter for verification purposes.

-

A listing of South Dakota state government employment opportunities, including internship openings, are distributed on a weekly basis within DRS as an on-going effort for staff to be aware of current openings to share with individuals they're working with.

Goal 3: DRS clients will have access to transportation services needed to obtain and maintain employment.

Strategy 3.1: Increase knowledge of the current transportation systems and compatibility with the employment systems.

VR staff attend local community interagency meetings to become more aware of transportation services. This information is then shared with new applicants and current clients. This includes information on available transportation options in their local community.

Training on transportation services is available and provided to current VR clients when it relates to their employment goal.

Strategy 3.2: Promote the participation with disability agencies, local communities and workforce partners to improve transportation services.

DRS staff participate in mayor's committees in Aberdeen, Brookings, Mitchell, Watertown, Sioux Falls, and Rapid City. The mayor's committees in these communities promote initiatives and strategies to improve the transportation services in their area.

DRS staff participated in an initiative (Care Council) to receive grant funding in Brookings for continued transportation services.

Strategy 3.3: Expand transportation options for Vocational Rehabilitation clients with a focus in rural areas and underserved populations.

DRS staff actively network with local transportation systems in their community. Many of these systems are utilized for transportation services for VR clients to obtain/maintain employment. An example is the Aberdeen Area Community Transportation Coordination Committee. DRS funds driver assessments, vehicle modifications and driver training for VR clients when it relates to their Individual Plan for Employment.

Lyft now provides free rides for people with disabilities when they have job interviews. DRS promotes this service in addition of funding transportation services from Lyft for current VR clients.

Goal 4: A VR Services delivery system that results in enhanced earnings, employee benefits, retention and career advancement for DRS clients.

Strategy 4.1: Improve the employment retention of Vocational Rehabilitation clients.

VR Counselors work to ensure that prior to closure of a client's VR case, all related services or long-term supports are in place. For individuals who are Social Security recipients, this includes completing the Plan for Sustaining Employment or ensuring that independent living and other needs are met prior to closing a case file. Clients are made aware that they can reach out to the VR Counselor after closure if concerns arise and often, we are able to remedy or assist with concerns without needing to formally open up another case file if contacted to assist someone in maintaining employment.

DRS has established various milestones payment incentives for providers to promote the employment retention of VR clients.

Starting in 2018, the Division of Rehabilitation Services began an initiative to bring Customized Employment services to South Dakota. Customized Employment takes a different approach to services than traditional VR services and encourages the job developer to get to know the job seeker on a much deeper level than is required or needed for most participants. Customized Employment is specifically meant for individuals with the most significant barriers to employment and will likely be appropriate for individuals who have never received VR services due to the assumed significance of their disability or for those who have not been able to reach employment success with traditional VR

services in the past. Providing this service will allow DRS to not only serve more individuals with disabilities in South Dakota but will also help to create good employment scenarios that will be long-term for the individuals receiving the service.

Strategy 4.2: Increase the knowledge base and understanding of supports and services for people with mental illness by VR staff, providers and businesses.

DRS sponsors two trainings annually for VR Counselors and Providers to utilize person centered thinking (PCT) tools and strategies to identify each individual’s unique needs and supports for employment. Additional PCT trainings are held by the Community Support Providers and this information is distributed to providers in their area.

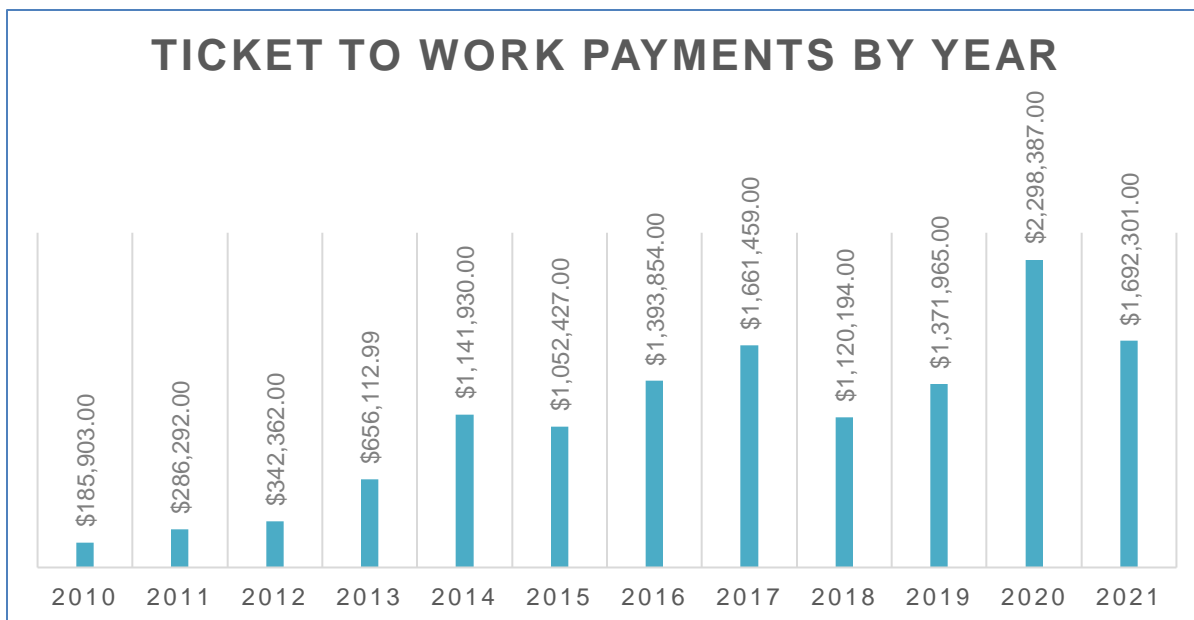
The Division of Rehabilitation Services has also begun training employment service providers and counselors on Customized Employment that will provide a more in-depth service to individuals with significant barriers to employment that have never received VR services or have not found successful employment with traditional services in the past. Customized Employment includes an in-depth analysis of the person and their environment to determine potential good fits before any job seeking is done allowing the employment specialist to individualize all aspects of the job search to the unique needs of the individual.

Strategy 4.3: Increase awareness and referrals to Benefits Specialists services for VR clients.

The SD Benefits Specialist Network (funded by DRS) provides counseling and advisement services to beneficiaries of SSI and SSDI who are currently working or seeking employment. Benefits Specialists answer questions about how work will impact SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare and other public benefits. Benefits Specialists also provide information about how work incentives can help beneficiaries increase their earnings. During Program Year 2018, 606 VR clients received services from a Benefits Specialist. The Benefits Specialist Network also provided a series of training sessions in six different communities. This training is for VR Counselors, Community Support Provider staff, Mental Health Center staff, and state agency staff. Training objectives include: understanding the Social Security Administration’s eligibility process; understanding how income from employment impacts eligibility for benefits; identifying and directing individuals to programs providing support; recognizing key SSA work incentives; and dispelling myths and encouraging people with disabilities to work. There were 106 individuals who attended these training sessions.

DRS has increased the number of Benefits Specialists with 2 additional contract staff. This increased the total Benefits Specialist to 7.

Strategy 4.4: Increase the knowledge base and understanding of the Ticket to Work initiatives for Social Security beneficiaries, VR staff, providers and businesses. RS funds incentives to providers when working with individuals who are Social Security beneficiaries. Shown is the chart displaying the increase in the utilization of the Ticket to Work initiative.



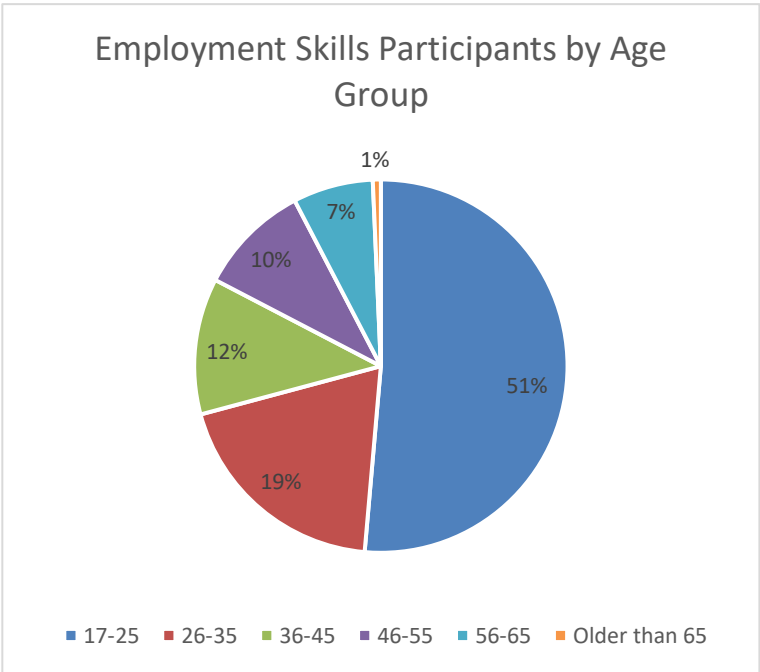
Strategy 4.5: Increase work experience opportunities for adults with disabilities with a focus on individuals with mental illness, those living in rural areas and underserved populations.

DRS utilizes a work experience program titled “Employment Skills” where adults or students who are not on an Individual Education Plan can receive up to 250 hours of paid work experience. In FFY 18, 147 individuals participated in this program.

DRS also coordinates with DLR work experience programs to provide job coaching and other support services to individuals in need of additional services for successful employment beyond those that can be provided through the DLR program. This partnership gives consumers the “best of both worlds” from each program expanding their success in these kinds of experiences.

Strategy 4.6: Continue in the development and increase utilization of vocational skills training for individuals with disabilities in South Dakota.

DRS works closely with the four technical institutes in South Dakota and other vocational skills training programs. In FFY 2018, 67 VR clients were receiving vocational skills training from the technical institutes.



With new reporting requirements, DRS has started tracking Measurable Skills Gains as well as Credential Attainment for clients to get a more accurate look at progress and benefit from services beyond a successful closure with employment. With this, there is a requirement to get documentation verifying progress, which staff are in the process of negotiating with schools and figuring out with consumers. At this time, number are not reflective of actual MSG’s and Credentials Attained due to difficulties in receiving necessary documentation to report on this progress.

DRS utilizes other vocational skills training programs typically through Career Learning Centers and other providers. These programs consist of programs such as computer training, medical transcriptionist services, office operations and other skill-based training programs.

DRS has revised the On-the-Job training procedures to increase utilization of vocational skills training directly from employers. DRS also works closely with DLR on the Registered Apprenticeship program.

Goal 5: DRS clients will have the skills, motivation and supports necessary to make an informed choice for successful daily living, employment, money management, personal and work relationships.

Strategy 5.1: Provide training on strategies and tools for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to assist VR clients to reach their employment goal.

DRS has provided extensive Motivational Interviewing (MI) training for VR Counselors to provide them the skills to assess their clients. MI is discussed during regular staff meetings to ensure that VR Counselors are utilizing the tools and assessing motivation during all phases in the VR process.

In 2019, DRS contracted with Trevor Manthy to provide MI Training for beginners (an initial training as well as follow up training) as well as a refresher training for more seasoned staff. In total, 69 DRS staff received training on MI practices and concepts.

Strategy 5.2: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors will utilize strategies and tools for assessing critical strengths and barriers to enhance the client’s personal life status and employment skills. DRS has provided extensive person center thinking (PCT) training for VR Counselors to provide them the skills to assess their clients. DRS now sponsors two PCT trainings annually for VR Counselors and providers. Additional PCT trainings sponsored by other agencies are shared with staff and providers. DRS also utilizes tools and information from the “Supporting Real Lives Across the Lifespan” folder developed by Developmental Disabilities.

Strategy 5.3: Expand provider supports for life skills development.

DRS has sponsored small grants to providers to provide employment and independent living skills training. These initiatives have utilized curriculum such as “Skills to Pay the Bills” for young adults. VR Counselors also work closely with the two Centers for Independent Living in providing life skills services for eligible VR clients.

Since 2016, DRS and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) have offered funding opportunities to Local Education Agencies and community providers during the summertime for training opportunities relevant to Pre-ETS for students with disabilities. Areas that are required to be included in the curriculum include job exploration activities, workplace Readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and information about vocational rehabilitation services and other programs available to assist individuals with disabilities. During the summer of 2020, DRS funded 9 initiatives that focused on Pre-Employment Transition Services to high school students with disabilities. Altogether, a total of 96 participants or students were involved in the trainings, 71 are currently receiving VR services, and 25 are potentially eligible for VR services.

Strategy 5.4: Increase awareness, supports and the utilization of self-employment as an employment outcome for VR clients.

DRS has developed a policy on self-employment and has provided training for VR Counselors to promote the utilization of self-employment. This training promoted ways to best assist VR clients who have a goal of operating a business. This has been promoted further in rural areas and discussions on identifying various generational things (including on the reservations) that may be happening where a next generation could take over and continue to provide a meaningful service to the community. DRS has been successful in working with the Oglala Sioux Tribal VR Program in jointly funding a number of self-employment cases on the Pine Ridge Reservation

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The state unemployment rate affects achievement of goals and priorities. When the unemployment rate is high, there is an increase in applicants for services as well as increased difficulty with finding competitive employment. Covid-19 had a major impact on DRS achieving some goals and priorities. Many individuals lost their employment or ended their employment due to the potential of getting the virus.

(2) An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

In June 2015, the Division implemented a 25% higher reimbursement rate to supported employment service providers who obtain a Certified Employment Support Professional credentials. The Division has also provided establishment programs to expand the capacity for supported employment services. In addition, the Division has been sponsoring trainings to help service providers improve their service ability and maintain their continued education credits.

In the fall of 2018, the Division implemented a new initiative to develop expertise in customized employment. The Division contracted with Griffin-Hammis Associates to provide training and technical assistance to Community Support Providers (CSP) and the Division. Community Support Providers will receive 40 hours of training using the curriculum on Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators. The initiative is divided into 4 phases allowing comprehensive training for all CSPs and the VR Counselor that works with the agency.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The state's low unemployment rate affects achievement of goals and priorities. When the unemployment rate is high, there is an increase in applicants for services as well as increased difficulty with finding competitive employment. Staff turnover with Employment Specialists continues to impede the supported employment program. With the establishment initiatives, 12 new additional Employment Specialists were hired by Community Support Providers. During the following 4 years, these positions have a turnover of two times. Covid-19 had a major impact on DRS achieving some goals and priorities. Many individuals lost their employment or ended their employment due to the potential of getting the virus. Some of the Supported Employment providers had to discontinue their services as they were reassigned to other services in their agency.

(3) The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

There are six primary indicators of performance under section 116 of WIOA:

1. **Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit);
 - . 52.6% of participants were employed during the second quarter after exit from the program for PY20
2. **Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit);
 - . 46.1% of participants were employed during the fourth quarter after exit from the program for PY20
3. **Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The median earnings of participants who were in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
 - . For PY20, the median earnings of participants employed during the second quarter after exit was \$2,860.
4. **Credential Attainment:** The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;
 - . In PY20, the Division recorded 34.5% of participants attained postsecondary credentials or a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. This is a 21% increase from the data collected for the last state plan period. While we have seen improvement in this area, the Division is making ongoing efforts to train staff for better understanding of credential attainment and obtaining documentation of participant progress. It is expected that this percentage will continue to increase with improved data collection.
5. **Measurable Skill Gains:** The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.
 - . The Division recorded 21.5% of participants obtained measurable skill gains leading to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. This percentage is expected to increase in conjunction with staff training. This was below our 45.7% expected level of performance, but sanctions were not implemented for PY20 as RSA felt that the data received to established levels of performance was not accurate enough to proceed with at this time based on data received this year. Like with credential attainment, additional training and clarification has been provided to staff and it is anticipated that this will increase the appropriate data collection/documentation of MSG's.

6. **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** addresses the program's efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time.

- For PY20, the division served a total of 453 businesses, a 40% increase from the 182 businesses served in PY19. Of those served in PY20, 56 business have been receiving services from DRS for more than 1 year.

(4) How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

Section 101 (a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as Amended requires the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to reserve and use a portion of the funds for:

1. The development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment and goals and priorities of the State; and
2. To support the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

Prior to the 1998 Amendments of the Rehabilitation Act, the Division of Rehabilitation Services was required to utilize 1.5% of the Federal 110 funds for Innovation and Expansion (I&E) activities. The Division of Rehabilitation Services budgets approximately \$200,000 annually for support services and strategic planning activities for both the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council. The contract provides for the following:

- Support staff for the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council contracted through the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative. This includes wages and benefits for a full time board support staff.
- Operational costs, equipment and travel for support staff and office supplies paid through the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.
- Costs involved in having members of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Statewide Independent Living Council attend meetings/training.
- Strategic Planning Initiatives approved by the Board of VR to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment and goals and priorities of the State.

q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. Include the following:

- (1) The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.**

Ensuring that quality supported employment (SE) services are being provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities in South Dakota is a priority for the Division. Quality is measured by more than just the number of individuals who receive supported employment services. Quality also incorporates key values such as self-determinism; choice; person-centered supports; quality of life; and full inclusion.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) is committed to providing quality supported employment services to individuals with disabilities. Providing training to VR counselors and supported employment service providers is essential to improving services. The Division currently contracts with the South Dakota Center for Disabilities to provide comprehensive training for supported employment service providers in South Dakota.

In June 2015, the Division implemented a 25% higher reimbursement rate to supported employment service providers who obtain a Certified Employment Support Professional credentials. In addition, the Division has been sponsoring trainings to help service providers improve their service ability and maintain their continued education credits.

In September of 2018, the Division also began contracting with Griffin-Hammis Associates to provide Customized Employment training to Division staff and employment service providers to increase knowledge and expertise in service created to better meet the needs of individuals with more significant limitations to employment. This will make available a new kind of service that will allow staff to personalize the job search and placement process more to increase successful outcomes for those who could not be served or who were not well served by more traditional services in the past.

(2) The timing of transition to extended services.

The State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency provides time-limited services needed to support an individual in employment. Vocational Rehabilitation can fund a maximum of 24 months of job coaching and follow-along services unless the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) indicates that more than 24 months of services are necessary for the individual to achieve job stability prior to transitioning to extended services. For individuals who are youth with intellectual disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation can fund a maximum of 48 months of job coaching and follow-along services.

Prior to the purchase of supported employment services, the need for the services, the appropriate extended services and funding, and the appropriate agency agreeing to provide the services are established and identified on the IPE. The transition to the extended services (long term funding source) occurs when 18 months of job coaching and follow along services have been provided or earlier if the following three requirements are met:

1. The individual's employment is stable;
2. The individual has met the hourly goal of employment established in the IPE; and
3. The extended services are immediate without any interruption in the provision of the ongoing services to maintain employment.

If the IPE indicates that more than 24 months of services are necessary for the individual to achieve job stability, the time-limited services of job coaching and follow along can exceed 24 months. After the individual has transitioned to extended employment, the individual must maintain employment for at least 90 days before the consumer's case is a successful closure.

SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

a) **Input of State Rehabilitation Council.**

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

- (1) input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;*

The Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (Board), the state rehabilitation council for the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI or Division), is in place to advise the Division in accordance with Title IV, Section 105 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Board advises the Division in the development of the state plan, the Board annual report, review and analysis of consumer satisfaction and other activities including review of policies that impact the expenditure of federal and state funds and the coordination and planning for service delivery to individuals involved in the SBVI vocational rehabilitation program.

The Board represents South Dakota citizens who are blind or visually impaired who can benefit from vocational rehabilitation and independent living services within the state. The Board's mission statement reflects these priorities: "The mission of the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired is to promote independence, employment and full inclusion for all citizens who are blind or visually impaired." All Board agendas are developed by the Board's Executive Committee with the Division Director. Policies are provided to Board members in draft format to offer the opportunity for input prior to finalization. No recommendations by the Board of SBVI were rejected by the Division during the plan period.

The Board of SBVI meets quarterly and meetings are open to the public and held in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act and the State's open meeting law, SDCL, 1-25-1. All meetings are announced through newsletters, on the SBVI web site and the State of South Dakota Board Portal. Due to the pandemic, some meetings were held virtually via Zoom with the opportunity for members and the public to attend by video conference or phone. In 2021 meetings resumed to in-person with the option to attend via video conference or phone.

The Division reported on service delivery and mitigation efforts due to the pandemic. SBVI staff worked remotely and delivered services via video conferencing or phone during the initial months of the pandemic. The impact of changes in operations on affected caseloads and successful outcomes as reported to the Board and reflected in Board of SBVI annual reports.

Annual Report to the Governor and RSA Commissioner: The Board directed staff to draft and complete annual reports for Program Years 2019 and 2020. Board members provided input regarding content of the reports. Client satisfaction results, Board activities, and performance of SBVI programs are included in the annual report. The reports were approved by the full Board prior to submission to the Governor and Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): South Dakota Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) and the Board of SBVI addressed priorities addressed in the WIOA Unified State Plan at quarterly Board meetings. Topics included: Department of Labor updates, the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, strategic planning, services for youth and minorities and collaboration with employers.

Updates to the plan were distributed to all board members for review and comments. Information obtained through public input, coordination with other entities including labor, education and consumer organizations is used to re-evaluate goals and strategies in the state plan. A link to the full plan with updates was distributed to stakeholders and Board members to provide another opportunity for input.

Public Input: The SBVI Division Director and other administrative staff attend and participate in conventions of the South Association of the Blind and National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota. There is representation on the Board from both organizations of the blind. The practice of conducting public meetings in conjunction with other events that bring together people who are blind or visually impaired has worked well. The Division will continue to seek opportunities for this collaboration in the future.

Board Support for Individuals/Organizations: The Board of SBVI sponsors events that promote employment of citizens with disabilities in conjunction with organizations of the blind and other organizations. The Division of SBVI developed procedures for Board sponsorship based on input from the Board of SBVI.

Governor's Awards for Employment of People with Disabilities: The annual Governor's Awards event is held to recognize individuals, employers, and organizations for their contributions to the employment of persons with disabilities. This annual event is a joint effort of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Department of Human Services.

The Division supported the Board's recommendation to assist with the Governor's Awards and supported attendance by Board members. The Board has representatives who assist with making the award selections along with members of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month: National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) activities are planned in communities across South Dakota every year by the Divisions of SBVI and Rehabilitation Services with input from the respective boards. Local committees of agency staff and stakeholders meet to plan activities that take place during the month of October to raise awareness of the contributions of employers and individuals with disabilities. In addition to a financial contribution towards the budget for the events, members of the Board of SBVI partner with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation to review and approve proposals for local NDEAM events.

The Division endorsed the Board's involvement in planning and supporting NDEAM activities in Program Years 2019 and 2020.

White Cane Awareness Day: The Board voted unanimously to support a white cane education activity in Sioux Falls in PY 2019. A march and presentations by law enforcement and citizens who were blind resulted in public awareness for those in attendance as well as those who experienced the event through news coverage on local television stations. In PY 2020 the Governor of South Dakota did a proclamation recognizing the public's responsibility to abide by white cane laws and promoted capabilities of citizens who are blind. Due to the pandemic public events were not held, but the Department of Human Services posted various Facebook posts throughout the month of October.

The Division supported the Boards sponsorship of the White Cane Day activities by assisting with costs for digital billboards in 2019 and promoting White Cane Day through social media in 2020.

Disability Awareness Day: Disability advocacy organizations gather at the state capitol during legislative session to educate law makers and the public. The Board of SBVI sponsors a booth and invites members of National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota and the South Dakota Association of the Blind to participate along with members of the Board of SBVI.

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF): The YLF is held annually with over 40 students in attendance each year. Several participants who are blind are supported by SBVI. YLF makes a significant impact in the students' lives through interaction with peer mentors and activities that teach self- advocacy skills.

The Division agreed with the Board's recommendation to support the annual Youth Leadership Forum for participation of transition age students with vision loss.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program Consumer Satisfaction: The survey was conducted in PY 2019 and 2020. Results of the survey were reported to the Board of SBVI and included in the Board's annual report. The Board approved using the SBVI Client Satisfaction Questionnaire-8 (CSQ-8) survey to obtain input. The survey consists of eight core questions and an additional seven questions that were developed with input from the Board of SBVI. A summary of survey results is included in the reports of progress section of the state plan.

Board Representation at Consumer Organization Conventions: The Board of SBVI has made the commitment to support the attendance of clients and representatives of the Board each year at state conventions of consumer organizations including National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota and South Dakota Association of the Blind.

The Division supported the Board's recommendation for Board member representation at consumer organization conventions. The Division also supported the recommendation that stipends be provided to first time attendees at the conventions. Public forums are held in conjunction with consumer organization conventions when possible.

Transition Week at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC): Transition Week is an annual summer youth program for high school students with vision loss from around South Dakota. The objective is to build skills and confidence through work and community involvement. During the summer of 2020 Transition week was modified to a day camp model due to precautions necessary because of the pandemic. In 2021 students were able to stay in dormitories at a university. High school students attend Transition Week to learn about employment and post-secondary options. Current and past Board members are invited to serve as mentors to the students by participating in activities and presenting.

The Board of SBVI Annual Report: SBVI staff teamed up with the Board of SBVI to complete and submit the Board's annual report on the status of SBVI programs in PY 2019 and 2020. The board has been instrumental in designing an annual report that is accessible and that provides valuable information to readers concerning SBVI programs and Board activities.

The Board annual report was completed and submitted within timelines mandated by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The Division incorporated all recommendations from the Board into the final reports.

Board Participation in Comprehensive System of Personnel Development: Board members are invited to participate in conferences and training activities sponsored by the Division.

Public Access to Meetings and Materials: The State of South Dakota has codified law to address open meeting requirements including that the meetings be open to the public and materials be available to the public. All SBVI Board meetings are held in locations accessible to individuals with disabilities and sign language interpreters or other accommodations are available upon request. Meetings are announced through the State of South Dakota news system for state government. In addition, meeting dates and locations are announced in newsletters, on the SBVI website and agendas are posted at SBVI offices. Agendas, minutes and Board membership, the Board annual report and other information are available through the State of South Dakota Board and Commission Portal. The goal of the portal is to make the boards and commissions more open and transparent. All information is provided in the alternative formats.

(2) the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

The Division of SBVI accepted all input and recommendations from the Board of SBVI.

(3) the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

No input or recommendations were rejected.

b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness *When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:*

(1) a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;

Counselors do provide services in all areas of the state. RSA suggested the request for waiver of statewideness specifically since some school districts do not participate in Project Skills. The South Dakota Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) provides work experiences for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) transition age students through Project Skills in conjunction with the Division of Rehabilitation Services. Project Skills is a cooperative arrangement with the local school districts and the state VR agencies. SBVI makes this program available to all schools including 20 Tribal/Bureau of Indian Education schools and 151 public school districts. Approximately 143 South Dakota's public and Tribal/Bureau of Indian Education schools are currently participating in the program. The program is available to the remaining school districts, but they have chosen not to complete a contract with the South Dakota VR agencies. The Rehabilitation Services Administration suggested that SBVI submit a waiver of statewideness for the Project Skills Program because all school districts do not participate.

Services Provided: Many students with significant disabilities don't have the opportunity to participate in gainful employment while in high school. Although willing, most employers cannot afford to provide the training and supports students frequently require on their first job. Project Skills assists students to build their work history while helping them to move into different and better jobs as they mature and are ready to take on new challenges. This program is a cooperative arrangement between the State VR Agencies and the local school systems. SBVI pays the wages, workers compensation, and FICA; the schools provide the job development, job coaching, and follow-along services for students at the job site.

Written Assurances: Each school enters into an agreement with SBVI for Project Skills. This agreement requires the school district to provide written assurance that they will use non-federal funds for their share of the Project Skills program as match for the federal funds allocated by SBVI, including funds contributed to the school by a private agency, organization, or individual. The Project Skills program is only available for students who are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation.

(2) the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

All services are provided under an approved Individualized Plan for Employment and authorized by the VR Counselor prior to being put into effect.

(3) requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

SBVI assures that requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified State Plan apply to the services approved under the waiver. Services provided under the waiver are included in the Individual Plan for Employment and authorized by the eligible individual's vocational rehabilitation counselor.

c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. *Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:*

(1) Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;

The Divisions of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) and Rehabilitation Services (DRS) have a strong working relationship with the Workforce System in South Dakota. The cooperation between our agencies is through formal written agreements and informal arrangements.

Formal Memorandum of Understanding with One Stop Partners: The Divisions of SBVI and DRS have a Memorandum of Understanding with the South Dakota Department of Labor. This agreement addresses: Provision of comprehensive services designed to assist unemployed citizens of the State of South Dakota to obtain gainful employment; Support for underemployed citizens of the state to prepare for new and more rewarding careers; Providing the youth of South

Dakota with a positive introduction into the world of work and subsequent follow-up and guidance to youth once they enter the workforce; Universal access to all customers, including those with special needs or barriers to employment; Customer choice in the way services are accessed, and in choosing services, based on individual interests and need; Integrated services through a planning process at the state and local levels, coordination of activities and services for customers, and sharing information and client data; and being fully aware of the role each partner has within the system and to understand the services each partner provides.

The Divisions of SBVI and DRS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation on 3/26/2018. This agreement addresses data sharing between agencies for common performance reporting.

Federal, State and Local Agencies and Programs: Other interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system consist of:

Project Skills: SBVI, in conjunction with DRS has cooperative agreements with local school districts throughout South Dakota for the provision of transition services. The Project Skills program provides paid work-based experiences in student's career interest areas to help them prepare for adulthood and the world of work.

Project SEARCH: Is an international trademarked and copyrighted program model, which focuses solely on employment for Project SEARCH interns. In conjunction with DRS, SBVI has cooperative agreements with local Project Search sites in Aberdeen, Brookings, Rapid City, Sturgis and Sioux Falls locations. Cooperative agreements lay out each party's responsibility for the Project Search activities provided to students with disabilities, including students who are blind or visually impaired.

School for the Blind and Visually Impaired: SBVI has an agreement in place with the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired for a Transition Specialist. This position serves as a liaison between the educational and vocational rehabilitation systems. Services include assisting with the development of transition plans, coordination of transition services for students with vision loss, technical assistance and consultation and training to youth who are blind or visually impaired.

Interagency cooperation with, and utilization of the services and facilities of the Federal, State, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture: These agreements typically are associated with AgrAbility Programs and South Dakota does not have an AgrAbility Program. The State VR Agencies do not have any agreements under the Secretary for Rural Development of the US Department of Agricultural.

The Division of SBVI has agreements in place with federal facilities for vendors who operate under the Business Enterprise Program (BEP). In addition, there is an agreement in place with the South Dakota Department of Transportation for proceeds from interstate vending in South Dakota to be used to support the BEP.

(2) State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has an agreement in place with Black Hills Special Services Cooperative/Dakota Link for the implementation of assistive technology services. Services are provided on a fee for service basis; assistive technology services and devices are consistently one of the top case service expenditures for SBVI.

(3) Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;

These agreements typically are associated with AgrAbility Programs and South Dakota does not have an AgrAbility Program. The State VR Agencies do not have any agreements under the Secretary for Rural Development of the US Department of Agricultural.

(4) Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has no agreements with non-educational agencies to serve out-of-school youth.

(5) State use contracting programs.

The State of South Dakota does not have a "State Use Law

d) Coordination with Education Officials. Describe:

(1) The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) requires vocational rehabilitation counselors to visit each school district in their territory at least annually. Counselors and/or the Transition Specialist are required to attend IEP meetings to address transition services for students with vision loss. Once eligibility is determined, individualized plans for employment are developed as soon as students can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services. In conjunction with the Division of Rehabilitation Services, SBVI has an agreement with the Office of Special Education to fund the Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP). The TSLP provides technical assistance and training to students, parents, local education agencies and adult service agencies to assist with transition activities that result in a successful transition from education to postsecondary opportunities and employment. The TSLP manages the following transition activities:

- **Project Skills:** Project Skills is a paid work experience program for high school students with disabilities in South Dakota. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies and local school districts which provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach. Project Skills helps to build the student's work history, references, and assists them with experiencing different career fields to assist them with making decisions on future employment goals.
- **Project Search:** Project Search is a national model based on partnering with large employers, local school districts and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. South Dakota currently has five Project Search sites in Aberdeen, Brookings, Rapid City, Sturgis, and Sioux Falls.
- **Youth Leadership Forum (YLF):** YLF is a unique career and leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors to learn more about self-advocacy skills and disability awareness. Students with disabilities cultivate leadership, citizenship, and social skills as a result of participating in this annual five-day event.
- **Catch the Wave:** Catch the Wave is a one-day seminar designed specifically for high school students who have a disability and are considering post-secondary education (either college or technical institutes). Students learn about preparing for postsecondary life including securing appropriate accommodations and developing self-advocacy and communication skills.
- **Let's Talk About Work:** A one-day conference designed for high school students with a disability to learn what it takes to be a successful employee. Students are given the opportunity to meet local employers to discuss soft skills needed for jobs.
- **Regional Transition Forums:** These forums are informal and interactive meetings for providers of services, transition-age students with disabilities, as well as family members to explore options for transition services opportunities.
- **Post-Secondary Disability Coordinators Forum:** This forum is held annually for Disability Coordinators from South Dakota Post-Secondary programs. The forums help to educate about the transition process from high school to post-secondary for students with disabilities, including the role of vocational

rehabilitation and pre-employment transition services.

- Summer Institute: The Summer Institute is a statewide training opportunity for Special Education teachers who are assisting students in the transition process. It is held for one week in the summer and offers training in areas of IDEA, introducing self-determination curriculum and other assessment materials, and IEP planning. Teachers receive graduate credit for the class and gain knowledge from Disability Services Coordinators from post-secondary schools, vocational rehabilitation staff, Transition Liaisons, community mental health agencies and independent living services staff.

Other Activities Include:

- Cooperative Agreement with the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired: This agreement supports a Transition Specialist who provides pre-employment transition services to students with vision loss on a statewide basis. This position serves as the bridge between education and adult services by working with students in public schools and at the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired as well as assisting vocational rehabilitation counselors with the provision of pre-employment transition services.
- Summer Programs for Students with Vision Loss: SBVI hosts an annual Transition Week at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. Students participate in job exploration and self-advocacy activities that help build skills and confidence as they prepare for post-secondary or employment opportunities.

Pre-Employment Transition Services:

SBVI networks with the Office of Special Education and other agencies to assure pre-employment transition services are available throughout the state. A brochure targeting students with vision loss has been developed and distributed to school guidance counselors, students, and parents.

Development and approval of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) before leaving school: SBVI has implemented policies and procedures to assure that students with disabilities access the vocational rehabilitation program and develop their IPE before they complete high school. This helps prepare students with vision loss to access a variety of services to address barriers caused by vision loss. SBVI VR Counselors contact school counselors and 504 coordinators on a regular basis to identify and meet with students who can benefit from services.

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired works cooperatively with local school districts, the South Dakota Department of Education, the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Department of Labor and Regulation and parents and students to provide vocational rehabilitation services to youth with vision loss and students as they transition from school to the adult world. SBVI is committed to providing quality transition services to youth with vision loss that facilitate movement from school to post-secondary education and/or successful employment. A seamless system with involvement of workforce partners and education is integral to provision of quality, individualized services.

(2) Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

- (A) consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;*

The South Dakota Cooperative Agreement Concerning Transition Services for Students with Disabilities was revised in July 2020. This agreement includes the following South Dakota entities: Office of Special Education, Division of Workforce and Technical Education, Division of Developmental Disabilities, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Department of Labor and Regulation, Division of Behavioral Health, and Division of Child Protection Services.

The agreement was created to operationalize South Dakota's transition process, Local Educational Agencies and Adult Services Agencies who are part of this agreement, will coordinate transition services for students and youth with disabilities. Coordination maximizes existing resources, thus avoids duplication, and promotes continuity of service provision. This coordination is important as it assures compliance with providing required services as well as compliance

with federal and state laws. The cooperating agencies will also encourage staff to take part in trainings sponsored by the other cooperating agencies to ensure that services are provided by qualified and appropriately certified staff.

South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI) Cooperative Agreement: This agreement was implemented to coordinate efforts to ensure that students who are blind or visually impaired receive effective, seamless services as they make the transition from school to adult life and employment. The agreement specifies roles and responsibilities including: Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services; The role for transition planning by personnel of SBVI and SDSBVI and local school districts that facilitate the development and completion of individualized education programs and individual plans for employment; Roles and responsibilities including financial responsibilities of each agency and determination of state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and procedures for outreach to students who are blind or visually impaired who need transition services. The cooperative agreement stipulates that SBVI and the SDSBVI will provide a full-time staff person who is committed to working with students who are blind or visually impaired on a statewide basis. This staff person provides technical assistance to educational agencies as the students move from school settings to postsecondary or other settings.

Students served by SDSBVI reside both at the residential school in Aberdeen, as well as, in school districts on a statewide basis. Outreach personnel employed by SDSBVI work with students who are blind or visually impaired in the public-school system.

SBVI and SDSBVI share information with students, parents, and local school districts about the importance of the skills of blindness to the success of students in the world of work. SBVI is an active participant in the transition planning process and counselors become involved with students as early as age 14. For those students enrolled at SDSBVI, SBVI representatives will attend pre-staffing meetings when appropriate. SBVI helps to determine appropriate vocational direction by providing work experiences and vocational counseling and guidance along with pre-employment transition services. The agreement clearly outlines that SBVI will attempt to have an IPE in place for every eligible student prior to graduation.

SDSBVI has responsibility for all South Dakota students with visual impairments under the age of twenty-one. For students of "transition age" between 14 and 21, that responsibility is shared with SBVI. The transition specialist and has outreach consultants work with students, families, schools, and SBVI staff on a statewide basis. Blind or visually impaired students residing in school districts that are unwilling to participate in project skills agreements are sometimes served through the SDSBVI transition specialist and outreach consultants to participate in paid work experiences.

Both SBVI and SDSBVI personnel are involved in transition services and regularly discuss mutual efforts and plan appropriate activities to benefit students and family members. Sharing of information takes place due to coordinated efforts between the Board of SBVI and the SDSBVI Advisory Council. Summer programs are coordinated to allow students to benefit from both SBVI and SDSBVI activities, and students are encouraged to participate in the Youth Leadership Forum, which is a week-long seminar to prepare high school age youth to be community leaders and self-advocates. All entities have been involved in planning the program, interviewing students, interviewing project staff and funding program activities.

SBVI also participates in an agreement for the Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP) which provides additional technical assistance and training to students with disabilities, families, local education agencies and adult service agencies. The agreement also includes the Office of Special Education and the Division of Rehabilitation Services. The TSLP liaisons are trained professionals who collaborate to perform transition planning and provide the consultation necessary to promote a smooth transition for students from the educational setting to enter or prepare for employment.

(B) transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;

The following activities are implemented by mutual involvement of SBVI and educational agencies as part of student's IEPs and IPEs:

Project Skills: Project Skills is a paid work-based learning experience program for high school students with disabilities in South Dakota. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies and local school districts which provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach. Project Skills helps to build the student's work history, references, and assists them with experiencing different career fields as they mature and take on new challenges.

Project SEARCH: Project Search is a business led program. This means that students learn relevant, marketable skills while immersed in the business and those businesses are active partners, participating without subsidies. Project SEARCH is a national model partnering with a large employer, local school district and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. South Dakota currently has five Project Search sites.

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF): YLF is a unique career and leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors to learn more about self-advocacy skills and disability awareness. Students with disabilities cultivate leadership, citizenship, and social skills as a result of participating in this annual five-day event that takes place on a college campus.

Catch the Wave: A one day conference designed specifically for high school students who have a disability and are considering postsecondary education (either college or technical institutes). Students learn about preparing for college life, securing appropriate accommodations, and developing self-advocacy and communication skills.

Regional Transition Forums: These forums are informal, interactive meetings for providers of services, transition age students with disabilities, as well as educators and family members.

Postsecondary Disability Coordinators Forum: This forum is held annually with all the Disability Coordinators from South Dakota Postsecondary programs invited to attend. The forum has been a very successful initiative for promoting transition services for students with disabilities.

Summer Institute: The Summer Institute is a statewide training opportunity for Special Education teachers who are assisting students in the transition process. It is held for one week in the summer and offers training that addresses IDEA, Vocational Rehabilitation and introduces self-determination curriculum and other assessment materials, along with IEP planning for transition service provision. Teachers receive graduate credit for the class and gain knowledge from Disability Services Coordinators from postsecondary schools, vocational rehabilitation staff, Transition Liaisons, community mental health agencies and independent living services staff.

SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) Transition Week: SDRC hosts Transition Week each summer for high school juniors and seniors who are blind or visually impaired from around the state. Students participate in skills training in the traditional SDRC training areas: Computer training with assistive technology (including speech and Braille output); Travel with the use of a white cane; Communication methods including Braille; Home Management which addresses essential tasks of independent living that include cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, etc.; Manual Arts including use of hand and power tools to build confidence in using the skills of blindness; and Low Vision Services, using adaptive devices, worksite assessments and low vision evaluations.

Students are also offered the opportunity to job shadow at a variety of job sites, based on their individual interests. A person-centered approach assists them to experience self-exploration and self-advocacy skills. They also experience dorm life while staying at a university dormitory. Tours and presentations from university staff help give them a better

understanding of what to expect from postsecondary education after high school.

(C) roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;

Cooperative Agreement: The agreement identifies each agency's roles and responsibilities including:

- Consultation and technical assistance to assist in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
- Transition planning by personnel of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and school district personnel;
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency including State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
- Financial responsibilities; and
- Procedures for outreach and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(D) procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

SBVI developed a brochure to promote transition services and pre-employment transition services for students with vision loss to school personnel, students, parents, and other entities. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors distribute the brochure to all schools in their territories on an annual basis and meet with school personnel to discuss transition services for students with vision loss.

Cooperative agreement between SBVI and the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI): This agreement was implemented to coordinate efforts to ensure that students who are blind or visually impaired receive effective, seamless services as they make the transition from school to adult life and employment. The agreement specifies roles and responsibilities including: Outreach by SDSBVI and SBVI personnel to identify students with vision loss who can benefit from transition services; Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies to plan for transition of students with disabilities from school to post school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services; The role for transition planning by personnel of SBVI and SDSBVI and local school districts that facilitate the development and completion of individualized education programs; Roles and responsibilities including financial responsibilities of each agency and determination of state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and Procedures for outreach to and identification of students who are blind or visually impaired who need transition services.

SBVI and SDSBVI share information with students, parents, and local school districts about the importance of the skills of blindness to the success of students in the world of work. SBVI is an active participant in the transition planning process and counselors become involved with students as early as age 14. For those students enrolled at SDSBVI, SBVI representatives will also attend pre-staffing meetings when appropriate. SBVI helps to determine appropriate vocational direction by providing work experiences and vocational counseling and guidance along with pre-employment transition services. The agreement clearly stipulates that SBVI will attempt to have an IPE in place for every eligible student prior to graduation.

SDSBVI has a responsibility to all South Dakota students with visual impairments under the age of twenty-one. For students of "transition age" between 14 and 21, that responsibility is shared with SBVI. SDSBVI employs a transition specialist through a cooperative agreement with SBVI and has outreach consultants that work with students, families, schools, and SBVI staff on a statewide basis.

SBVI also participates in an agreement for the Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP) which provides additional technical assistance and training to students with disabilities, families, local education agencies and adult service

agencies. The agreement also includes the Office of Special Education and the Division of Rehabilitation Services. The TSLP liaisons are trained professionals who collaborate to perform transition planning and provide the consultation necessary to promote a smooth transition for students from the educational setting to enter or prepare for employment.

e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations. *Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.*

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) offer access to a variety of services from professionals trained in areas that benefit those who participate in services from the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI). South Dakota is a large sparsely populated state, the seventeenth largest state by area, but fifth smallest by population and the fifth least densely populated of the 50 United States. The option to access services through CRPs allows citizens with disabilities access to a variety of services. CRPs consist of Community Support Providers, Mental Health Centers, Career Learning Centers, Job Shops, Independent Living Centers, and Communication Services for the Deaf.

In conjunction with the Division of Rehabilitation Services, SBVI has policies and procedures in place for provider standards to establish and approve service providers. Clients are provided choices in the selection of providers. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors issue authorizations to the provider for services agreed upon in the Individual Plan for Employment. The scope of services purchased depends upon each individual's needs, interests and employment goal.

The Divisions of SBVI and DRS continually work on improving the capacity and quality of services from CRPs. A variety of education and training options are developed to offer the opportunity for CRP staff to become Certified Employment Support Professionals. Those who meet requirements for certification and attend two-day person-centered thinking training receive a 25% increase in their service rate. Thirty-six hours of continuing education are required every three years to maintain the certification. SBVI annually assesses the training needs of staff and plans future training activities or identifies other resources to meet those needs.

SBVI provides blindness specific training to employment support professionals to improve the quality of service provision for citizens with vision loss. This 5 ½ hour web-based training is a four-part series that is available to providers via the SBVI website.

f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services. *Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.*

The coordination of time limited and ongoing support services is vital to the provision of supported employment services. The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired works collaboratively with service providers and public and nonprofit agencies to coordinate funding sources and policies related to supported employment. These efforts are categorized into two areas: Formal Cooperative Agreements and Informal Cooperative Efforts with Agencies

Formal Cooperative Arrangements: SBVI and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) have in place a formal cooperative agreement for transition services (including pre-employment transition services) for youth with disabilities. The agreement includes the Department of Human Services Divisions of SBVI and DRS and the Divisions of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, Office of Special Education, and the Department of Labor and Regulation. The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to define: services including supported employment; eligibility requirements; referral process; responsibilities of each agency; extended support services to be provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Behavioral Health; time-limited services to be provided by SBVI and DRS; the process for service plan development; requirements for transition to extended services; and, responsibilities for post-employment services.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities has a policy memorandum in place with the Divisions of SBVI and DRS. The memorandum defines how each agency's funding sources are coordinated regarding time limited and ongoing support services. This agreement has had a significant impact on service provision for people with the most significant impediments to employment resulting in the ability to obtain and maintain employment.

A Memorandum of Understanding is in place to help with coordination of services and funding between the Divisions of Behavioral Health, SBVI, and DRS. This agreement serves as a policy directive for the Community Mental Health Centers and the local SBVI and DRS Offices. It provides guidance in three areas relative to providing vocational services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness: Services to be provided by the Community Mental Health Center; Services available from Vocational Rehabilitation; and, Appropriate Division to pay for the variety of services. Informal cooperative arrangements with agencies: SBVI works collaboratively with other State agencies on a day to day basis to better serve individuals with disabilities. Following are some of these collaborative efforts: SBVI State Office staff are co-located with the Division of Developmental Disabilities, communication to coordinate services between Divisions occurs as needed for citizens with a variety of disabilities. SBVI's vocational rehabilitation counselors are co-located with the local Department of Labor and Regulation Offices in the state's two largest cities. When vocational rehabilitation counselors travel, they make frequent visits to collaborate with staff from the Department of Labor and Regulation, Social Services, Community Rehabilitation Programs and other agencies to reinforce mutual clients and a seamless delivery system. The public vocational rehabilitation agencies are working closely with all partners identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to collaborate in the implementation of the mandates in the law. Staff serve on implementation workgroups, task forces, and local Interagency Resource Teams.

- g) Coordination with Employers.** *Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:*
(1) VR services; and

See What I Can Do Outreach Campaign: SBVI developed an outreach campaign with employers specifically targeted as part of the audience to be reached by the campaign. Focus groups and surveys of employers provided insight about their awareness of the capabilities of citizens with vision loss and the availability of SBVI services. A television ad, radio ads, brochure and banner stands were developed to promote hiring citizens with vision loss as well as relying on SBVI for job retention for current employees. Materials include students and youth with disabilities to promote employer engagement.

Business Representatives on the Board of SBVI: There are two business led non-profit entities in South Dakota that offer supports to the business community. The Business Resource Network in Sioux Falls and the Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills in Rapid City provide education, consulting, and technical assistance to businesses on the hiring, accommodations, supports and retention when employing people with disabilities. The Executive Director of the Workforce Diversity Network is a former SBVI client and a member of the Board of SBVI. The manager of the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (in the Division of SBVI) is on the governing board for the BRN. The Workforce Development Council representative on the Board of SBVI is the gubernatorial appointed Department Secretary for the Department of Labor and Regulation. This representation brings the employer/business perspective to strategic planning and Board activities.

Business Organization Involvement: The Division is working towards increasing memberships and regular involvement of staff within organizations to connect with employers. Some examples of the organizations include: local Chambers of Commerce, Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM), and the South Dakota Retailers Association. These opportunities support connecting with businesses to learn more about their workforce needs and technical assistance and training opportunities.

Business Engagement Teams: Business engagement teams at the local level strengthen cross agency partnerships and focus on opportunities to engage businesses. This model ensures interaction and collaboration between workforce development partners and the business community, including business led organizations like the South Dakota Retailers Association, the Society for Human Resource Managers and Chambers of Commerce. The opportunity for an open line of communication for addressing industry demands for skills and preparing citizens for successful career paths will help to

sustain and expand business partnerships.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP): The SBVI Business Enterprise Program supports snack shop, cafeteria and vending opportunities for citizens who are blind. In addition to federal sites, the BEP operates in all state office buildings in the state capitol of Pierre. The BEP is partially supported by income from interstate vending through an agreement with the South Dakota Department of Transportation. Blind vendors and the SBVI BEP manager interact with businesses and employers to promote program expansion and sustain existing operations.

(2) transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

Initiatives with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities to facilitate the provision of vocational rehabilitation services and transition services (including pre-employment transition services) for students and youth with disabilities

South Dakota Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has implemented and participated in a number of initiatives to work with employers to benefit students and youth with vision loss who are served through SBVI. These initiatives include:

Project Skills: Project Skills is a paid work experience program for high school students with disabilities in South Dakota. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies and local school districts which provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach. Project Skills helps to build the student's work history, references and assists them with experiencing different career fields as they mature and take on new challenges. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and school staff identify employment sites, businesses, and employers to match the students with work experiences in their interest areas.

Project Search: Project Search is a national model partnering with a large employer, local school district and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs. South Dakota currently has Project Search sites in Aberdeen, Brookings, Rapid City and Sioux Falls. Other opportunities to expand Project Search sites will be explored with businesses in South Dakota.

h) Interagency Cooperation. *Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:*

(1) the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, in conjunction with the Division of Rehabilitation Services has formal and informal interagency arrangements that define levels of cooperation with a number of agencies and organizations to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment.

State Medicaid Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act: The South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) is the State's Medicaid Agency. The South Dakota Department of Human Services has the following agreements with the DSS Medicaid Agency.

Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation as well as Guardianship and Conservatorship: This agreement was implemented on August 1, 2013 to assure each agency's response to meet the needs of persons who are at risk for abuse, neglect and exploitation or in need of guardianship and or conservatorship services.

Interagency Resource Teams: This agreement was implemented to meet the need for continued interagency involvement at the local level in an efficient and effective manner. This agreement ensures that resources available through the State of South Dakota are available to citizens with disabilities, including those who face barriers to employment; addresses fully utilizing the capacity and expertise of each agency and encourages the continuing efforts and participation of local interagency teams.

Money Follows the Person: This agreement was implemented on June 10, 2014 for the implementation of the Money Follows the Person initiative involving persons eligible for Medicaid waiver services.

Medicaid Fraud Control: This agreement was implemented on July 1, 2015 for the purpose of defining mutual

responsibilities in the Medicaid Program to ensure maximum efficiency and benefit to the State and to minimize duplication of effort. Title XIX Medicaid Funding Memorandum of Understanding This agreement was implemented for the purpose of defining administrative and fiscal accountability responsibilities.

State Agency Responsible for Providing Mental Health Services: The South Dakota Department of Social Services/Division of Behavioral Health is the state agency responsible for providing services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities. A Memorandum is in place to help coordinate the services and funding between the Divisions of Behavioral Health, Rehabilitation Services, and Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired. This document serves as a policy directive for the Community Mental Health Centers and the local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices. It provides guidance in three areas relative to providing vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness: Services that can and should be provided by the Community Mental Health Center, Services available from Vocational Rehabilitation (DRS and SBVI), and Which Division pays for the services.

The Core Partner Alignment Consortium will review and revise agreements as necessary to meet the requirements of WIOA.

(2) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

State Agency Responsible for Developmental Disabilities: The South Dakota Department of Human Services/Division of Developmental Disabilities is the state agency responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. This agency is in the same department as the State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs (SBVI and DRS) allowing the opportunity for regular communication and collaboration between programs.

Policy Memorandum with Division of Developmental Disabilities: The Division of Developmental Disabilities has a Policy Memorandum in place with the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. This Policy Memorandum defines how each agency's funding sources are coordinated in regard to time limited and on-going support services. This policy agreement has had a significant impact on how services are provided to individuals with the most significant impediments to employment.

(3) the State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

State Agency Responsible for Providing Mental Health Services: The South Dakota Department of Social Services/Division of Behavioral Health is the state agency responsible for providing services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities. A Memorandum is in place to help coordinate the services and funding between the Divisions of Behavioral Health, Rehabilitation Services, and Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired. This document serves as a policy directive for the Community Mental Health Centers and the local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices. It provides guidance in three areas relative to providing vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness: Services that can and should be provided by the Community Mental Health Center, Services available from Vocational Rehabilitation (DRS and SBVI), and Which Division pays for the services.

The Core Partner Alignment Consortium will review and revise agreements as necessary to meet the requirements of WIOA.

Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities: This agreement was implemented for the purpose of enabling students with disabilities to reach their maximum potential in their transition from high school to the adult world. This agreement includes the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, Developmental Disabilities Agency, Department of Social Services/Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Education/Special Education and the Department of Labor and Regulation.

- i) **Comprehensive System of Personnel Development;** *Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development. Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:*

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(A) *Qualified Personnel Needs. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:*

- (i) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Currently, SBVI employs seven vocational rehabilitation counselors who serve citizens with vision loss statewide and one vocational rehabilitation counselor who works primarily at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. A total of 478 people were served during Program Year (PY) 2019 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020), decreasing to 411 people served in PY 2020. Caseloads, territories, and customer service are reviewed periodically to determine the best utilization of existing staff and to determine future ratios to best meet the needs of the people receiving vocational rehabilitation services. For PY 2019, the ratio of counselors compared to the eligible people receiving services is an average of 1:68 clients per caseload. The ratio for PY 2020 was an average of 1:53 active clients per caseload. The changes in the caseload size were likely a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, where many clients remained at home and refused services. The Division evaluates the need for a position in a specific location before replacing an employee when a vacancy occurs. Counselors who serve sparsely populated areas cover large territories and serve fewer clients due to demographics of a large sparsely populated state. Those with larger caseloads work in urban areas with higher population which results in less travel to deliver services.

- (ii) the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel

Total positions; Current Vacancies:

FFY 2020-21 FTE:

Administrative = 5; Vacancies = 0

VR Counselors = 7; Vacancies = 0

Rehab Center Rehabilitation Teachers = 6; Vacancies = 0

Rehab Center Rehabilitation Manager = 1; Vacancies = 0

Rehab Center Rehabilitation Counselor = 1; Vacancies = 0

Rehab Center Program Specialists = 1; Vacancies = 0

Rehab Center Clerical Support = 2; Vacancies = 0

- (iii) *projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.*

The following illustrates the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services and includes projected vacancies in the next 5 years. The projected vacancies indicated below are for personnel who are expected to retire or turnover of staff.

Type of Position Total Positions Current Vacancies 5-year projected vacancies:

Administration 5 Current Vacancies 0 Projected 2

Counselors 8 Current Vacancies 0 Projected 2

Support Staff 2 Current Vacancies 0 Projected 1

Rehabilitation Center Teachers 6 Current Vacancies 0 Projected 3

Rehabilitation Center Administration 2 Current Vacancies 0 Projected 1

(B) *Personnel Development. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:*

- (i) *a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;*

South Dakota State University is the only institution of higher education in South Dakota that provides a master's degree in vocational rehabilitation.

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has implemented procedures and activities to ensure staff receive training so they are able to deliver quality services to citizens with vision loss and to ensure the Division has an adequate supply of qualified professionals and paraprofessionals. The Assistant Director of SBVI is the designated training officer for the Division; this position works with the Department of Human Services training officers and other SBVI staff to coordinate activities and trainings related to the comprehensive system of personnel development. In addition, cooperation with other entities, including WIOA partners, provides awareness of relevant training opportunities that pertain to employment and serving individuals with disabilities are available and accessible to SBVI staff.

Data System on Qualified Personnel Needs

The system to collect and analyze data related to qualified personnel needs and personnel development consists of two components. The South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) maintains a database of all training activities attended by Division staff including BHR sponsored training, seminars, workshops, conferences, and undergraduate and graduate level courses supported by the Division. Individual district offices maintain files on educational backgrounds, training activities and goals and plans of employees to meet the agency requirements for qualified rehabilitation professionals and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). Supervisors are required to address individualized professional development plans as a part of the annual employee evaluation. Individual training needs are identified and when necessary, are reported to the training officer to be considered in addition to the analysis of results from the annual training needs assessment. This analysis assists with prioritizing future training.

The Division has a web-based management information system (VR FACES) which includes a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) module for tracking employee training and education. This system also tracks whether Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are certified by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) or their development plan to work toward CRC status. Input of information is required of individual employees and/or supervisors with access to all information by the Training Officer and other management staff. This system is efficient for addressing individual training needs as well as for projecting future personnel and training priorities. Staff progress toward meeting CSPD requirements is also tracked by the VR FACES system.

The Division is committed to assisting vocational rehabilitation counselors with obtaining the necessary academic training and professional experience to meet the standards of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. During 2020 and 2021 school years, three counselors are attending master's classes at South Dakota State University. Newly hired counselors will begin applying for admission into a master's program once they complete their probationary period of employment.

(ii) the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

South Dakota State University has approximately 19 students enrolled in the master's program. Currently, there are three students enrolled in that program who are SBVI counselors.

(iii) the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

During school years 2019-2021, one SBVI student graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University utilizing RSA

funding scholarship, with certification obtained that same year. SBVI had no employees complete a master's program from SDSU during that time. However, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired hired one of the SDSU Masters students in June 2019 and assisted/supported her in completion of her internship and taking/passing her CRC certification exam. Another SDSU student who completed her master's program was hired by SBVI in May 2020 and SBVI supported her in taking/passing her CRC certification exam shortly after starting employment with the agency.

Newly hired rehabilitation counselors are encouraged to pursue a master's degree and become Certified Rehabilitation Counselors if they have not already obtained that certification. The Division will support costs associated with pursuit of master's degrees. Funds for supporting employees' pursuit of master's level degrees consist of RSA grants, and program 110 funds.

Senior rehabilitation counselors are certified through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification process. The priority for filling counselor vacancies is a master's degree and CRC certification. Eligibility for CRC certification (already possesses a master's degree but no certification) is the next preferred option. Due to lower starting salaries compared to most surrounding states, it's necessary to hire individuals with bachelor's degrees for entry-level counselor positions and encourage them to become qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors within a specific time period.

(2) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel. *Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.*

Recruitment of qualified staff is accomplished by announcing positions through professional organizations such as the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) and RehabACTion, the state Bureau of Human Resources web site and other job search sites, such as Indeed. The Department of Human Services Facebook page will share job announcements for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor vacancies as well. Job announcements are shared with the Board of SBVI and the state Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, as well as professional and client organizations, such as blind client organizations and South Dakota RehabACTion.

Retention and advancement are accomplished through the opportunity for rehabilitation counselors to participate in the master's level vocational rehabilitation education programs and obtain CRCC certification. Once they meet the requirements, they can be promoted to a higher paygrade as a Senior Rehabilitation Counselor and take more of a leadership role within their offices. Senior rehabilitation counselors are also encouraged to apply for management and administrative positions when vacancies occur.

Training opportunities are available through a variety of organizations to assist SBVI in preparing staff to deliver training and to retrain in priority areas for vocational rehabilitation service provision. ACVREP provides training in blindness specific topics; this training leads to professional certification in vision rehabilitation, orientation and mobility, and low vision therapy. Agency sponsored training through seminars, conferences, video conferences, and other training opportunities on topics such as: Orientation and Mobility Instruction and Practice; Low Vision Demonstration and Practice, Eye Report Interpretation and Service Provision; Transition of Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired; Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resiliency Interface Training: Exploring Neighborhood and Community Resources in Discovery; Independence Through Assistive Technology; Employer Engagement; Innovative Services for Native American Youth with Disabilities; Challenging Ethical Thinking; Customized Employment; Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Vulnerable Adults; Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program; and Linking Achievement with Basic Psychological Process. Web based training is also available for a variety of topics.

Training opportunities related to the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are sponsored and attended by a variety of participants from state

departments and public and private entities.

To address the priority of recruiting individuals with disabilities, the South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources has in rule that any applicant who meets minimum requirements for employment who has been certified to have a significant disability by a rehabilitation counselor will be interviewed for the position, commonly referred to as disability preference. This ensures that individuals who have disabilities can interview and compete for openings in the designated state unit and other programs in state government. Efforts to recruit individuals from minority backgrounds include announcing positions through the State Department of Labor and Regulation and the state's Native American Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Job announcements are available to individuals residing on Tribal lands and the state's Reservations. It is the policy of the Department to provide equal opportunity employment to all employees and applicants for employment. No person working at the Department's facilities is to be discriminated against in employment because of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability.

SBVI anticipates the need to recruit three counselors in the next five-year period based on personnel turnover trends and data on those eligible for retirement in this time period. South Dakota State University (SDSU) offers a Master of Science in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling. SDSU started their master's program in the fall of 2005, and their first student received a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling in the fall of 2007. Recruitment of qualified staff is accomplished through promoting job announcements at SDSU in addition to other universities in Region VIII with master's level programs. SBVI has a cooperative agreement with SDSU to provide internship opportunities, participate on their advisory council, and to recruit qualified candidates. SBVI provides paid internship opportunities for students pursuing their master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Division also offers internship opportunities for students with other related degrees when appropriate.

The University of Northern Colorado, Montana State University and Utah State University are other sources for recruitment of graduates with master's level degrees in vocational rehabilitation counseling. In addition, South Dakota universities offer accredited programs with master's degrees in counseling. Graduates of these programs are recruited for vocational rehabilitation counselor openings. They are hired and trained to prepare for the CRCC exam to meet the highest qualifications in the state for rehabilitation counselors.

SBVI staff with disabilities is currently at 21%. Reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure employees with disabilities have access to the latest technology to perform their jobs. Staff who are blind are provided drivers as a reasonable accommodation.

- (3) ***Personnel Standards.*** *Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:*
- (A) *standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and*

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has implemented procedures and activities to ensure staff receive training so they are able to deliver quality services to citizens with vision loss and to ensure the Division has an adequate supply of qualified professionals and paraprofessionals. The Assistant Director of SBVI is the designated training officer for the Division; this position works with the DRS training officer and other SBVI and DRS staff to coordinate activities related to the comprehensive system of personnel development.

Working in conjunction with the Bureau of Human Resources, the Division has established minimum state standards for secretarial, rehabilitation counselors, senior rehabilitation counselors and program administrator positions. These standards are reviewed periodically considering changing personnel needs, labor market supply and training resources.

These are generic job classifications within the state Bureau of Human Resources system. The Division does establish specific education and work experience requirements for individuals to enter these positions.

Since South Dakota is a small state, there are several unique staff positions. Each year in the personnel performance evaluation process, SBVI identifies the professional development needs of these staff. Each employee's immediate supervisor monitors individualized staff development plans. National certification standards are used for the Orientation and Mobility Specialist and the Low Vision Therapist through the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP). The Assistive Technology Specialist attends regional and national training to keep up to date on the latest advances in technology. In addition, staff members hold certifications for Deaf-Blind services from Helen Keller National Center, Traumatic Brain Injury, Braille, and assistive technology through training and various accrediting organizations.

Newly hired rehabilitation counselors that possess a bachelor's degree are encouraged to pursue a master's degree and senior rehabilitation counselor status. The Division will support costs associated with pursuit of master's degrees. Funds for supporting employees' pursuit of master's level degrees consist of RSA grants and program 110 funds. Senior rehabilitation counselors are certified through the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. The priority for filling counselor vacancies is a master's degree and CRC certification. Eligibility for CRC certification (already possesses a master's degree but no certification) is the next preferred option. Due to lower starting salaries compared to most surrounding states, it is necessary to hire individuals with bachelor's degrees for entry-level counselor positions and encourage them to become qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors.

Leadership and management training and assignments with senior level management teams assist counselors to prepare for supervisory and administrative positions. Senior rehabilitation counselors are encouraged to apply for management and administrative positions when there are vacancies.

(B) the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the Vocational Rehabilitation regulations refer to personnel as "Qualified Personnel" and "Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors". SBVI has the following definitions in place to address qualified rehabilitation counselors employed by the Division:

All Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors:

- a. meet the standards for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; or
- b. meet the standards for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor but are not CRC certified; or
- c. meet the standards for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; and
- d. have been employed by the Division for a minimum of six months; and
- e. have an approved plan to be eligible to take the CRC certification test by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) within eight years.

Employees who are not qualified rehabilitation counselors receive oversight and monitoring by a CRC certified supervisor and mentoring by senior counselors for non-delegated functions of the VR process. Counselors who meet the requirements to become certified through the CRCC are considered qualified counselors. However, to be eligible for a promotion to senior counselor, counselors are required to be certified by the CRCC. Due to retirements and staff resignations, the percent of CRC Certified counselors has dropped from 75% down to currently 37.5%. Three counselors are taking master's level coursework through SDSU and are in an approved plan for pursuing CRC certification.

Cooperation with other entities in state government such as the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR), the Department of Health, and the Department of Education ensures that training opportunities are available which address

topics relevant to the field of rehabilitation. In addition, Division staff members provide training concerning considerations when working with individuals with disabilities to DLR employees. Division staff members have various opportunities to attend intensive trainings at little or no cost. These conferences and/or seminars are also an opportunity to collaborate with other entities who deliver services to individuals with disabilities. DLR employees provide training on labor market trends, economic development opportunities, business engagement and other information. Training on labor market information is also conducted online via the Labor Market Information (LMI) e-Learning Series. This five-part video series provides information on how LMI can be a useful resource for local offices, workforce development professionals, policy makers, business owners, program, or economic development planners, etc. The modules are based on a benchmark PowerPoint version provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Leadership development and capacity building are addressed through distance learning courses as well as agency sponsored training sessions. Assistive technology training is available through Dakotalink, the state's assistive technology project, the SBVI Assistive Technology Specialist, and other nationally recognized entities via web-based training. The State Bureau of Information and Technology and Bureau of Human Resources provide assistive technology training for employees with disabilities who utilize assistive technology on the job, and when requested, will provide individualized training.

Annual training conferences address current research by contracting with national Rehabilitation Research and Training and Technical Assistance programs to address specific topics identified in the annual training needs assessment. In addition, information is disseminated from RSA updates and Technical Assistance Circulars to ensure SBVI staff are cognizant of the latest trends in vocational rehabilitation.

SBVI works with the state's Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Projects to provide training to staff on cultural diversity. Ongoing training is provided to address informed choice as it relates to agency policies and practices. The State Rehabilitation Council has recommended strategies that have been implemented for addressing informed choice in service delivery and training that addresses the evolving labor force and needs of people with disabilities from minority backgrounds.

- (4) **Staff Development.** *Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:*
- (A) *a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and*

The Division is committed to assisting vocational rehabilitation counselors to obtain the necessary academic training and professional experience to meet the standards of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. During FFY 2020, one employee of the Division was pursuing a master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation, and in FFY 2021, two newer employees of the Division are participating in the master's program in Vocational Rehabilitation through South Dakota State University.

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has approached personnel development through several avenues. Each employee's current level of education and training, as well as short term and long-term training needs have been tracked by supervisors who evaluate methods for addressing these needs at least annually through the Accountability and Competency Evaluation (ACE). Individual training needs assessments are conducted to evaluate current levels of education, understanding of fundamentals of vocational rehabilitation, blindness and disability-related issues, professional development, and related topics. Self-evaluation, supervisor input and recommendation sections on the ACE assisted in assessing needs for training which were pursued through a number of approaches. The results of the assessments were recorded for individuals, groups of related positions (i.e., rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation teachers, supervisors, managers, clerical, etc.) and for the agency. The ACE system allowed for ongoing feedback between employees and supervisors by incorporating a self-audit while addressing professionalism, work quality and

areas for development as well as areas of strength. BHR workshops are identified under the following headings: supervisory, job enrichment, and technology with other training and job-specific skills. The training officer works to identify resources for obtaining training in areas related to vocational rehabilitation (including the Rehabilitation Act Amendments and priorities in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and RSA regulations), including serving citizens with the most significant disabilities and those from minority backgrounds. Responses from satisfaction surveys and input from the Board of SBVI are also methods utilized to identify training needs.

Paraprofessional staff are offered ongoing training in word processing and other software applications as well as office-related courses such as effective writing, customer service and organization skills through the BHR. Courses specific to the vocational rehabilitation case management information system and other topics specific to vocational rehabilitation are offered through in-service training sessions, usually taught by agency specialty staff.

SBVI works closely with DakotaLink, the state's assistive technology project funded, in part, through Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. DakotaLink provide hands on training on assistive technology in group settings and on an individual basis. Rehabilitation Counselors are required to attend training at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, including training on assistive technology. One DakotaLink Technician is housed in the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and is available to assist with assistive technology needs of clients and staff. The SBVI Assistive Technology Instructor is available for technical assistance and training statewide via video conferencing, Microsoft Teams, Zoom and FaceTime in addition to onsite training.

(B) procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

Annual training conferences address current research through contracting with national Rehabilitation Research and Training and Technical Assistance programs to address specific topics identified in the annual training needs assessment. In addition, information is disseminated from RSA updates and Technical Assistance Circulars to ensure SBVI staff are cognizant of the latest trends in vocational rehabilitation. Monthly newsletters address relevant topics in a timely manner.

Training on IDEA and transition services for students with disabilities is coordinated with the State Division of Special Education and the Transition Services Liaison Project. The annual Youth Leadership Forum is planned in collaboration with the Special Education Program, Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Transition Project. The annual Fall Conferences is a combined effort with the Department of Education Special Education Program, Department of Labor and Regulation, other Divisions within the Department of Human Services, and other entities to offer training on transition and pre-employment transition service options.

Training needs of the state's Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, Centers for Independent Living, the Client Assistance Program, and community rehabilitation programs are considered in planning training activities within the division.

Training needs are addressed through a variety of resources. Other resources accessed by staff to meet their individual training needs include workshops, conferences and seminars hosted by other government organizations such as Special Education, Department of Labor and Regulation and the Bureau of Human Resources. Professional organizations (SD RehabACTion, Association for Education and Rehabilitation (AER) of the Blind and Visually Impaired, Community Support Providers of SD, and SD National Alliance of Mental Illness) work with the training officer to prioritize topics relevant to employment of people with disabilities and base workshops or conference sessions on the training needs assessment conducted by the Division. Client organizations (SD Association of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind of SD, and the SD Association of the Deaf) are examples of sponsors of training. Distance learning activities provide a cost-effective

method for participation in training on several topics pertinent to RSA priorities. Independent study and mentoring by supervisors and senior rehabilitation counselors are other means for meeting individual staff development needs.

- (5) **Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs.** *Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.*

Sign language interpreters are available for all training sessions for participants with hearing loss as well as for those who are deaf/blind. CART services have been available at conferences for individuals who are deaf, in addition to sign language interpreters. Braille, materials in electronic format and enlarged print are provided to all staff or clients who request alternative formats. The Division has developed fee schedules and vendors to address the need for interpreters of foreign languages and Native American languages including Lakota, Nakota and Dakota dialects.

- (6) **Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.** *As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.*

Training on IDEA and transition services for students with disabilities is coordinated with the State Division of Special Education and the Transition Services Liaison Project. The annual Youth Leadership Forum is planned in collaboration with the Special Education Program, Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Transition Services Liaison Project. The annual Fall Conferences are a combined effort with the Department of Education, Special Education Program, Department of Labor and Regulation and other entities to offer training on transition, independent living, and pre-employment transition service options. In addition, SBVI works with the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to address needs of transition-age students with vision loss on a statewide basis.

j) Statewide Assessment

- (1) *Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:*

As a core partner in the WIOA Unified state Plan, the South Dakota Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) has conducted an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities residing in the state as per the need's assessment section of the State Unified Plan and the requirements of the revised state plan guidance. Public vocational rehabilitation has collaborated with their WIOA partners in this assessment and the subsequent planning process to assure that the workforce needs of the state to include individuals with disabilities was addressed. The public vocational rehabilitation agencies in South Dakota are submitting results of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment with the VR Portion state plan update to reflect that a comprehensive statewide needs assessment has been accomplished with this plan submission.

2020 Triennial Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

The 2020 Triennial Needs assessment was constructed around the guidelines of the Rehabilitation Services Administration's six steps to assessing and addressing vocational rehabilitation needs. The executive process was developed in collaboration with the SBVI Board (SRC) and established both goals and process for the CSNA. The summary of the process is below:

1. Review of key data and service narrative points generated from latest available federal program year to establish if there exists any need for revisions of previous CSNA findings.

2. Supplement the CSNA to establish a new baseline of need and strategy regarding transition services and other needs relative to the new and additional requirements of WIOA.
3. Work directly with the South Dakota Workforce Development Council to identify the service and program needs to expand the infrastructure required by enhanced mission, goals, and strategies of WIOA.
4. Revise in collaboration with the South Dakota Boards (SRCs) the VR Portion of the Unified State Plan to reflect both the WIOA emphasis, the service needs of South Dakota individuals with disabilities, and finally adjust the goals and strategies as necessary.

Source Reports and Data (Base 2019 CSNA Documentation)

1. SBVI: Data Summary:
2. SBVI/DRS Field Needs Assessment
3. Governor's Task Force on Employing People with Disabilities
4. SBVI: 2019 Staff CSNA Survey of Needs
5. South Dakota SBVI Board Meeting Minutes. (2017-19)
6. South Dakota Indicator 14 2018 Report/South Dakota Department of Education
7. WIOA Primary Performance Indicators

Source Reports and Data (Key Data and service narrative bridge analysis conducted in 2017/19)

1. SBVI: Agency Year End Data (Board Reports),
2. South Dakota Department of Human Services Mission and Strategic Plan
3. South Dakota Office of Special Education Indicator 14 Results
4. South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation Annual Workforce Reports
5. American Community Survey Data

(A) with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

"Individual with a Most Significant Disability" means an individual with a disability who meets the criteria for having a significant disability and in addition has serious limits in two or more functional capacities (such as, but not limited to, mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome. Individuals who meet the criteria for this Priority Level I category are determined to be individuals with the "Most Significant Disability". The needs identified for this category were as follows:

1. Transition Services Cooperative Agreement

SBVI's specialized mission and lower numbers in terms of caseload size creates a profile of need in transition services that can better be understood in terms of more individualized needs of students with visual impairments or blindness. Issues of accessibility, specialized skill needs, and support accelerate for young students with most significant disabilities as they reach transition age. Consequently, the term transition for this group of persons with disabilities is frequently expressed as a stage of life confluence of problems to be solved. The need for assistive technology training, ongoing support, accessibility advocacy were the most frequently expressed needs in the 'transitions' context even though these are also lifetime challenges for SBVI clients with the most significant disabilities.

2. Counseling and Guidance:

Counselors expressed a need for training in assisting their clients in self-confidence and motivation. Related were requests from staff for continued access to benefits counseling and help in providing a person-centered approach to services.

3. Administrative Infrastructure:

SBVI joined the chorus of need for support from both agencies (DRS/SBVI) in cultivating more providers with the necessary skills to work with their specialized caseloads and more training resources for specialty staff. Finally, as has been the case for both agencies that additional long-term supports are needed for their clients including older blind clients.

4. Job Development and Placement:

For those with the most significant disabilities there was a request for alternatives to sheltered work now that it is no longer an acceptable outcome and for additional job development and placement support from persons qualified to respond to the needs of blind and low vision clients.

5. Assistive Technology (AT)

Leadership and field staff emphasized the need for continued support and resources for AT into the future. Because of the satisfaction often expressed for the current arrangement for AT services this need also falls under the heading of preserving assets.

(B) who are minorities;

(C) who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

SBVI reviewed data, inquired through the SBVI Board and surveyed staff regarding possible underservice for individuals with disabilities with particular attention on assessing any unmet needs of individuals who are members of minority communities. The following chart reflects that SBVI caseloads for minorities exceed the state population. However, needs were identified that indicate areas to be addressed.

	2019 Caseloads	STATE POPULATION
White	72%	85.0%
American Indian or Alaska Native	15%	8.6%
Black or African American	5%	1.7%
Two or more races	7%	2.8%
Asian	1%	1.0%

1) Language Culture and Public Education: While data revealed a proportionate response to population, narrative responses emphasized the need for staff, employer and public education activities and events that addressed language and communication, cultural sensitivity and training. Also emphasized was addressing immigrant attitudes and fears regarding 'government services' and the difficulty previous immigrant experiences presented in referral finding and service. Significantly this set of responses regarding minorities is become more diversified particularly in larger communities such as Sioux Falls with growing immigrant communities. In the data sets many immigrant groups are likely to be statistically underrepresented. Respondents expressed an increased awareness that the success of VR services is contingent on public awareness and willingness to work with minorities and immigrants. Staff requested additional support in expanding cross education and communications with tribal programs.

2) Behavioral Health: Surveys including staff and leadership expressed the need for more and extended supports for persons with severe and persistent mental illness in rural communities and, also referred to additional support when working with Tribal programs. Related needs were expressed under public education following this category of need in terms of communities of support and outreach relative to older blind populations

3) Public Education: Staff described issues of mobility and access for older blind and anticipated the need for communities of support and outreach.

4) Access: Access needs were described not in the context of underservice, but more as needs experienced at the level of mainstream functional community rather than agency. The needs ranged from access service provision to people with blindness trying to operate in medical and retail settings as well as occasionally some public agencies. These needs were often presented as education needs. People also requested technical assistance to employers and the public as necessary prerequisites to full participation of persons with low vision or blindness.

(D) who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

South Dakota has entered the WIOA era with an existing comprehensive and coordinated public and private statewide workforce investment system. Throughout the WIA era South Dakota VR programs have had a partnership of agencies and employer resources described in the Unified Plan with the South Dakota Workforce Development Council. Public vocational rehabilitation has been represented on the State Workforce Development Council. In addition to the methods of identifying needs described elsewhere in this attachment, SBVI personnel partner with the state workforce system through local interagency teams, and by attending and presenting at statewide workforce conferences. SBVI currently participates on the Department of Labor and Regulation WIOA Implementation and Planning Group to assure the shifts in emphasis in the statewide vision and goals meets the needs persons with disabilities and are in alignment with the resources and opportunities of the greater South Dakota economic community.

1. **Administrative Infrastructure:** The feedback of need regarding the Workforce Partners and system was limited given the specialized nature of the Division. The needs that were commented on addressed the general need for a coordinated client experience provided across agency lines including requests for increased data sharing.
2. **Employer Education and Support:** In this need category, the emphasis was educating employers on non-intuitive aspects of the low vision and blindness experience. In this context we can include the need for coordination of employer contacts in local communities and particularly smaller communities among job placement specialists and job developers.

(E) who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

Due to the progressive nature of vision loss, the majority of applicants in Program Year 2018 were between the ages of 45-64 (106). Twenty-six students/youth participated in services in the same period.

Youth with disabilities are defined as individuals with disabilities between the age of 14 and 24 (under 25). Students with disabilities are defined as individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and under 21 as of July 1st; and enrolled in a secondary school receiving services under an Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan. Students with disabilities can receive Pre-Employment Transition Services without applying for Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) are required, in collaboration with the local educational agencies, to provide, or arrange for the provision of, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for all students with disabilities in need of such services without regard to the type of disability from VR funds reserved for this purpose.

State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies are required to set aside 15% of the Federal Award each year to provide the Required and Coordination of Pre-Employment Transition Services. The remaining balance can be utilized for Authorized Activities. These categories are explained below. In addition, Pre-ETS may be provided to all students with disabilities, regardless if they have applied for VR services. These students with disabilities who have not applied are recorded as Potentially Eligible (PE) in VR FACES.

Calculation of 15% Reserve Funds for FFY 2020

- I. Total Number of Students with disabilities in South Dakota
Using Special Ed data for SFY 2019
2,748 on IEP
749 on 504 Plans
3,497 Total Students with Disabilities ages 16-21
- II. Determine the number of students with disabilities who need Pre-ETS
Using VR data, 1234 students with disabilities were in the VR FACES for SFY 2019
- III. Calculate the cost for the provision of Pre-ETS
\$1,638,380.13 needed for Pre-ETS

- IV. Calculate the amount of funds reserved for the provision of Pre-ETS
 DRS & SBVI FFY 2020 Award is \$11,107,868.00
 15% is \$1,666,180.20
- V. Set Aside Amount
 \$27,800.07

Transition Cooperative Agreement: This category surfaced needs for increased counselor connectivity to schools including closer IEP working relationships, early education of parents and students, additional student services in summer month.

Administrative Infrastructure: Surveys, SBVI staff and leadership articulated needs in this context in the focus of continued refinement of the service connections and relationships between SBVI, DRS, schools and the community providers.

Additional CRP/Provider services: Respondents specified customized employment capacity and resources necessary for placement, stabilization and longer-term support of clients experiencing blindness or low vision.

(2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

1. **CRP Provider Services:** Respondents described the need for job placement providers in rural and urban settings. Related were expressions of need for a broader range of provider services including home services.
2. **Independent Living:** When respondents described needs in the context of living independently, the focus was primarily on the needs for medical and social support for the medically fragile client and elderly clients with blindness and or low vision.
3. **Administrative Infrastructure:** Two Commentators focused on provider training regarding billing and the VR process.
4. **Rural Access/Economy/Job Development/Placement:** These two categories of need repeated the need of job placement specialists in primarily rural areas and job placement personnel qualified to serve low vision and blind clients in both rural and urban settings.

(3) Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Rehabilitation Counselors focus on counseling and guidance, working closely with students to determine an employment goal based on their interests, skills and abilities, and plan services that will help them to obtain their goal of employment. Of plans developed for youth, counseling and guidance is the most common service at 90%, followed by transportation to attend pre-employment transition activities at 33%. SBVI has an agreement with the SD School for the Blind & Visually Impaired for a Transition Specialist who provides statewide transition services to schools and students with vision loss.

In conjunction with the Division of Rehabilitation Services, SBVI has an agreement with the South Dakota Office of Special Education to fund the Transition Services Liaison Project (TSLP). The TSLP provides technical assistance and training to students, parents, local education agencies and adult service agencies to assist with transition activities that result in a successful transition from education to postsecondary opportunities and employment.

1. **Transition Services Cooperative Agreement:** The emphasis of the cooperative agreement related to needs focused on refining the connection of VR agency staff with transitioning students and school staff to increase

referrals. The surveys and interviews also described the need to reach out to parents and students in terms of general orientation to transition services and timing. Finally, comments occurred in both agencies identifying the need for cross training adult service and school personnel regarding related policies and procedures.

2. **Administrative Infrastructure:** Field service and leadership interviews emphasized the need to continue the refinement of coordination of the resources of SBVI, DRS and CRPs in building the South Dakota transition program.
3. **Additional CRP/Provider services:** Additional customized employment capacity and resources were requested.

k) Annual Estimates. Describe:

(1) The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services.

According to the US Census Bureau's 2020 American Community Survey, 2.2% of the individuals with disabilities in South Dakota are experiencing a visual disability totaling 19,266. Working age people with vision loss between the ages of 18 and 64 comprise 10,768 citizens in South Dakota. According to the most recent Cornell University Disability Statistics Report (2018), South Dakota has an employment rate of 62.7% of citizens working with a visual disability between ages 21-64, the 4th highest in the nation, and well above the national average of 45.4%. Of those individuals with a visual disability, 41.7% are working full time.

(2) The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

(A) The VR Program;

To assist the Statewide Workforce System in developing the needs determination section of the State Unified Plan, SBVI provides all partners the statewide estimates of individuals who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and supported employment services and the costs for services provided as planning and programming data as part of the SBVI state plan update.

These annual estimates are reported to the State Workforce Development Council as part of partner planning for addressing service needs statewide to include services to citizens with disabilities. Public vocational rehabilitation is represented on statewide work groups that address service delivery and capacity among workforce partners including local needs of the one-stop centers across the state. The number of individuals eligible for services in the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has ranged from 137 to 195 over the past several years. In Program Year 2020, SBVI provided services to 411 people with 137 people found eligible for services during that year. In Program Year 2021, it is estimated that 435 eligible citizens will be served by SBVI and in Program Year 2022, 460 eligible citizens will be served by SBVI.

(B) The Supported Employment Program; and

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired will not be receiving funds for Title VI Part B Supported Employment funds. Supported employment services will be provided utilizing Title I, Part B Vocational Rehabilitation funds.

(C) each priority category, if under an order of selection.

N/A

(3) The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

SBVI is currently able to provide services to all people eligible for the vocational rehabilitation program.

(4) The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

In FFY 2022, for Title I, Part B Vocational Rehabilitation, SBVI anticipates a total of 435 eligible citizens will be served at a case service cost of \$970,920.

In FFY 2023, for Title I, Part B Vocational Rehabilitation, SBVI estimates 460 eligible citizens will be served at a case service cost of \$1,026,730.

I) State Goals and Priorities. *The designated State unit must:*

(1) Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

The South Dakota Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) mission is to provide individualized rehabilitation services that result in optimal employment and independent living outcomes for citizens who are blind or visually impaired. To accomplish this mission, the Board of SBVI (State Rehabilitation Council) and the Division of SBVI jointly developed the goals listed below in cooperation with core partners identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Information from the comprehensive statewide needs assessment was also used in the development of these goals.

(2) Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs.

Goal 1: Improve earnings, benefits, and career advancement for clients served by SBVI.

Goal 2: Work with workforce programs and other partners so that referral sources, employers, and citizens who are blind or visually impaired are aware of the unique services provided by SBVI.

Goal 3: Ensure that Vocational Rehabilitation clients receive services that allow for informed choice and help them to improve their ability to communicate, interact, and perform to their potential in their community.

Goal 4: Strengthen the agency's ability to provide quality services to minority populations in South Dakota.

Goal 5: Provide quality transition services to eligible students that facilitate their movement from school to post-secondary education and/or optimal employment outcomes.

(3) Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

(A) the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

The goals were developed based on the analysis of comprehensive statewide needs assessment and public input.

(B) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

The goals were developed based on SBVI meeting performance accountability measures of WIOA.

(C) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

RSA monitoring review reports, annual report cards, client satisfaction survey responses and other relevant information is shared with the Board of SBVI for consideration in developing goals, priorities and strategies for SBVI service delivery.

All relevant information was considered and shared with the Board of SBVI when developing goals, priorities and

strategies.

m) Order of Selection. *Describe:*

(1) Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:

(A) The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services.

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired is able to serve all eligible individuals and is not on an order of selection.

(B) The service and outcome goals.

(C) The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.; and

(D) How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

N/A

(2) If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

N/A

n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds

(1) Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

South Dakota SBVI no longer receives an annual allotment of Title VI—B funds. The South Dakota Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) is committed to ensuring that rehabilitation services are made available on a statewide basis to individuals with the most significant disabilities who have not traditionally been competitively employed or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent. These services are available through the Supported Employment Program. Because SBVI does not receive a federal supported employment allotment, these services are provided through using basic vocational rehabilitation funds.

(2) Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including :

(A) the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

South Dakota SBVI no longer receives an annual allotment of Title VI-B funds. Due to the reporting burden with the requirements for matching and tracking Title VI-B funds, SBVI will serve individuals with the most significant disabilities through the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Youth with the most significant disabilities will have access to Project Skills, paid work experiences, Project Search and other opportunities. Extended services will be available from SBVI for youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 4 years with other entities providing long term supports after that time. With the addition of Customized Employment as an available service, this will better serve youth that may not have been well-served by more traditional services.

(B) how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.

Medicaid waiver funds are available for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities. In addition, the public-school system offers options for expanded supported employment opportunities.

o) State's Strategies. *Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR*

The Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired established goals and strategies to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain competitive jobs in the labor market, increasing self-sufficiency, personal independence, and full inclusion into the community. The goals were developed as a result of the information compiled from the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, and strategies listed below are key steps in accomplishing those goals:

Strategy 1.1: Increase utilization of South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind to improve skills of clients served, including alternative techniques and vocational services.

Strategy 1.2: Improve the quality of job development services to SBVI clients by providing specialty training on blindness and visual impairments to providers.

Strategy 1.3: Increase the use of SSI/ SSDI benefits specialist services and training to assist individuals with significant disabilities to manage their benefits.

Strategy 1.4: Provide annual training in areas of need that are specific to blindness or visual impairment including assistive technology (AT).

Strategy 1.5: Exceed performance levels established for the Performance Indicators under Evaluation Standard 1-Employment Outcomes (established in 34 CFR Sec. 361.84(c)(1) of the Federal Regulations).

Strategy 2.1: Design and disseminate outreach materials and participate in activities that target employers to educate them on the capabilities of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Strategy 2.2: Annually conduct two or more activities that promote services for citizens with vision loss including those from minority backgrounds.

Strategy 2.3: Provide annual training and materials for staff to train them to market services to targeted audiences.

Strategy 2.4: Annually review and update outreach materials and procedures that staff utilize to promote services to referral sources, employers and other entities.

Strategy 3.1: Develop assistive technology training resources to improve accessibility for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities.

Strategy 3.2: Increase the provision of independent living and social skills training when necessary to VR clients to ensure that they have the skills necessary to obtain employment.

Strategy 3.3: Promote access to programs and services in the statewide workforce investment system.

Strategy 3.4: Serve at least 5 individuals in Supported Employment to ensure services are comprehensive and have long term supports.

Strategy 4.1: Maintain regular contact with Native American Nations and minority service agencies to increase awareness of services that are available.

Strategy 4.2: Collaborate with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs to ensure that all eligible individuals are served

in an effective and efficient manner on reservations and tribal lands.

Strategy 4.3: Provide bi-annual training to agency staff to provide tools for meeting the cultural and linguistic needs of culturally diverse populations.

Strategy 5.1: Continue transition activities and services, such as Project Skills, Project Search, the Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave, and SBVI Transition Week, which provide students with valuable experience and skills needed to move from school to employment.

Strategy 5.2: Develop additional mentoring opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired.

Strategy 5.3: Collaborate with the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Transition Specialist to provide statewide education to teachers, students, and family members about services available to students through SBVI.

(2) How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis.

SBVI makes assistive technology available to rehabilitation clients throughout the rehabilitation process. It is typical for SBVI to expend 25 percent of the VR case service budget on assistive technology (AT) devices and services each year. To ensure clients are assessed for their individualized needs, the state's assistive technology project, DakotaLink, provides AT services on a fee for service basis with certified technologists located across the state. An Assistive Technology Specialist is housed at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind to provide intensive AT training and technical assistance. While providing one on one and classroom training, the AT specialist is also available to offer technical assistance via e-mail, phone, Skype and other modes to assist VR clients with their AT questions. In addition, SBVI has a variety of programs to meet assistive technology needs of citizens with vision loss who meet eligibility requirements for the older blind program. The Assistive Technology Advisory Committee of the Board of SBVI addresses assistive technology by meeting and bringing recommendations to the full board.

SBVI will expand assistive technology training resources to improve accessibility for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities.

Assistive technology services and devices will be available throughout the rehabilitation process through SBVI vocational rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation teachers or private providers. These services are available on a statewide basis.

(3) The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

In 2020, the Census Bureau estimated that 80.6% of South Dakotans were White, 8.7% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 3.6% were Hispanic or Latino, .29% were Black or African American and 1.5% were Asian. Native Americans represent the largest minority group in South Dakota, with nine reservations with autonomous governing bodies. Collectively they represent the Great Sioux Nation and share a common culture and language. Typically, these reservations are very rural, isolated, with high poverty, and high unemployment rates. Nearly half of all Native Americans in South Dakota live on reservations.

Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors who serve each of the reservation areas. These VR Counselors meet with local Indian Health Services and tribal government staff to identify potential referrals. VR counselors have been welcomed to work out of tribal offices when meeting with applicants/clients living on the reservation. Unemployment on South Dakota's reservations varies from 70 % to 89%. There is very little private

employment. Most individuals are employed by either tribal or federal governments.

South Dakota is fortunate to have six American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Programs (AIVRS). These programs have greatly improved access to vocational rehabilitation services for those Native Americans served by these AIVRS Programs. The Division has established an on-going working relationship with each of the programs. Native American clients living on reservations have the choice of either being served by the AIVRS, the state VR program, or jointly by both programs. We encourage clients to be served either by the AIVRS Program or jointly with SBVI. The AIVRS Programs have a better grasp of the cultural and service delivery barriers that exist on reservations. SBVI has access to specialized programs and services which are not feasible for an AIVRS Program to maintain. On those reservations where an AIVRS Program exists, SBVI will focus its outreach activities to network with the AIVRS Programs to ensure that Native American clients have access to the full range of vocational rehabilitation services. SBVI has a formal cooperative agreement with each AIVRS Programs.

Outreach activities that target businesses to educate them on the capabilities of people who are blind or visually impaired will include: annually conduct activities that promote services available for citizens with vision loss including those from minority backgrounds; annually review and update outreach materials and procedures that staff utilize to promote services to referral sources, employers and other entities; ensure that outreach methods address the needs of those with the most significant disabilities; maintain regular contact with minority service agencies to increase awareness of services that are available; collaborate with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation and other programs to ensure that all services are provided in an effective and efficient manner while addressing cultural diversity; provide SBVI staff with resources and training so they are able to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of diverse populations; and strengthen extended services to assure successful employment for clients with the most significant disabilities.

The Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has Native American representation, which assists in providing guidance and consultation to the Division on policy issues affecting Native Americans.

(4) The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services).

Continued transition activities and services include: Project Skills, Project Search, Youth Leadership Forum, SBVI Transition Week, and the Transition Services Liaison Project that provide students with pre-employment transition services. Provide summer Pre-ETS activities in communities statewide through agreements with local providers. Collaborate with the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and public schools to improve access to pre-employment transition services. Conduct outreach activities with teachers, students with disabilities, and their parents to provide information about SBVI services. Through a coordinated effort of systems, prepare youth with the knowledge, skills, and ability to become economically self-sufficient. Educate teachers, students, and family members about the services available through SBVI and other workforce partners. Increase the provision of independent living and social skills training to ensure clients and youth have the skills required to obtain employment.

(5) If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State.

Increase utilization of South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind to improve skills of SBVI clients, including alternative techniques and vocational services.

(6) Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA.

SBVI has provided training to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors on quarterly reporting of Measurable Skills Gains and Post Exit Employment. The case management system (VR FACES) has a quarterly processing procedure to assist VR Counselors to report on their clients.

(7) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

Educate staff and clients on programs and services offered through other entities including the Department of Labor and Regulation, the South Dakota Department of Education and other public and private entities including the Veteran's Administration. Educate teachers, students, and family members about the services available through SBVI and other workforce partners. SBVI will serve as a resource on accommodations for citizens with vision loss to other components of the statewide workforce system.

(8) How the agency's strategies will be used to:

(A) achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

Strategies specify a variety of local and statewide activities to be carried out by the Division of SBVI staff that will support reaching the goals established based on the comprehensive statewide need's assessment. Activities scheduled throughout the year are planned and conducted with the intent to meet goals established by the Division of SBVI. Strategies are specific action steps developed with input from the Board of SBVI that are specific and measurable. Progress in meeting these goals is reported on at quarterly Board meetings.

(B) support innovation and expansion activities; and

Utilization of Innovation and Expansion Funds Section 101 (a) (18) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended requires the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to reserve and use a portion of the funds for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, with an emphasis on services to individuals with the most significant disabilities; and to support the funding of the State Rehabilitation Council (Board of SBVI).

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has reserved funds for utilization in innovation and expansion activities. These funds will be used for the following activities: Support the costs of the Board of SBVI. This includes staff costs (for drivers), accommodations and other direct costs involved in Board activities. Support initiatives approved by the Board of SBVI to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment, monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 and goals and priorities of the State. Areas of emphasis include the provision of assistive technology services and devices, services for students and youth with disabilities, improving community rehabilitation programs, working with businesses and employers to achieve and optimize employment opportunities and outcomes for individuals served by SBVI in conjunction with other core partners in the workforce system.

(C) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

SBVI will address any barriers to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program. All SBVI offices are at accessible locations

along bus routes, public meetings are held at locations that are physically accessible to people with disabilities, and accommodations are available upon request. Alternative formats are available for information (Braille, flash drive, large print, and auxiliary aids) and at events, as well as interpreters for deaf/hard of hearing or foreign language needs. The SBVI web page is accessible to individuals with disabilities who use accessibility software.

p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. Describe:

(1) An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

Goal 1: Improve the earnings, benefits, and career advancement for clients served by SBVI.

Strategy 1.1: Increase utilization of South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) to improve skills of clients served, including alternative techniques and vocational services: Program participation for SDRC services were provided to 223 participants in FFY2020 and 253 in FFY2021. This decrease from the previous year is due largely to Covid-19 impacts on providing services to clients at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind.

Strategy 1.2: Improve the quality of job development services to SBVI clients by providing specialty training on blindness and visual impairments to providers: SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors perform job development in instances that their expertise in blindness and visual impairments is critical. Training on service provision is provided by counselors to employment providers including resources available to clients with vision loss. Training is available at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind free of charge to providers. Job safety training for citizens with vision loss webinars and presentation materials have been saved on the SBVI website for providers to be able to view and learn. This four-session training is very valuable to employment specialists, teaching them the anatomy of the eye, common eye diseases and how they affect vision, learning about barriers and how to overcome them, low vision assistive technology, orientation and mobility, and useful resources for HR staff and supervisors helping employees who experience vision loss to maintain employment.

Strategy 1.3: Increase the use of SSI/SSDI benefits specialist services and training to assist individuals with significant disabilities to manage their benefits: Counselors referred 15 clients for benefits specialist services in PY2020 and 25 clients in PY2019. Counselors continue to work closely with Benefit Specialists and promote their services with clients who are on SSI/SSDI. South Dakota has increased the number of Benefits Specialists with two additional contract staff, which increases the total number of benefits specialists to seven.

Strategy 1.4: Provide annual training in areas of need that are specific to blindness or visual impairment including assistive technology (AT): In Program Years 2019 and 2020 the following training sessions were provided to SBVI staff: Orientation and Mobility Instruction and Practice; Low Vision Demonstration and Practice, Eye Report Interpretation and Service Provision; Transition of Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired. Staff utilize the AT Specialist at the SD Rehabilitation Center for training regarding specific topics related to assistive technology. In addition, DakotaLink provides hands on training on assistive technology in group settings and on an individual basis. Newly hired Rehabilitation Counselors also are required to attend training at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, including training on assistive technology. Rehabilitation Counselors can utilize expertise from any of the certified/qualified staff at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind to obtain individualized training on an as needed basis.

Strategy 1.5: Exceed performance levels established for the Performance Indicators under Evaluation Standard 1-Employment Outcomes (established in 34 CFR Sec. 361.84(c)(1) of the Federal Regulations): Program Year 2020 (PY20) Performance: The number of people were served through the SBVI VR Program during PY20 decreased to 411, a substantial decrease from 478 in PY2019 because of Covid-19 and client resistance to pursue employment during that

time. Unfortunately, this also impacted those VR clients who had their cases closed successfully employed with a decrease to 60 successful closures in PY2020 and 103 successful closures in PY2019. The median earnings for people who obtained and/or maintained employment fourth quarter after exit through the South Dakota vocational rehabilitation programs, both General and Blind, in PY2020 was \$2,860.

PY2020 marks the thirteenth year that SBVI has partnered with the Board of SBVI to conduct a client satisfaction survey using the SBVI Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ—8) survey. The survey consists of eight core questions and an additional seven questions that were developed with the help of the Board of SBVI. In Program Year 20, the survey was mailed out to 138 people who received services and were closed from the SBVI vocational rehabilitation program during the past fiscal year. Of 138 questionnaires mailed out, 66 were returned, which is a 49 percent response rate. Overall client satisfaction continues to be very high, with an average rating of 3.62 with satisfaction levels from 1 (Poor) to 4 (Excellent) as rating options. The variables correlating the strongest level of satisfaction was increased independence, returning if they need additional help and recommending the service to others.

Goal 2: Develop outreach methods so that referral sources, employers, and citizens who are blind or visually impaired are aware of the unique services provided by SBVI.

Strategy 2.1: Design and disseminate outreach materials and participate in activities that target employers to educate them on the capabilities of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Staff prioritized outreach efforts to educate businesses, schools, providers, and the public on services available from SBVI. Staff report on their efforts monthly and this is a performance expectation on their annual appraisal reviews. A system for tracking has been implemented so metrics can be analyzed in the future. Employer contacts are submitted and tracked utilizing the electronic case management system Staff are expected to enter their contacts monthly.

Strategy 2.2: Annually conduct two or more activities that promote services for citizens with vision loss including those from minority backgrounds: In PY2020, partnership opportunities were very limited. Reservations closed their borders due to Covid and their staff were restricted from traveling. With assistance from the state VR program, including letters of support in submitting a proposal, one additional Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation program has been funded for the 121 Grant, creating a sixth Tribal VR program in South Dakota. SBVI continues to annually participate in transition age students' events and sharing a booth at the annual Lakota Nation Invitation basketball tournament in Rapid City, which is a forum for information dissemination to all the state Tribes in December 2021.

Strategy 2.3: Provide annual training and materials for staff to train them to market services to targeted audiences: Outreach materials were developed and disseminated to staff with instructions for marketing services to target audiences including employers, service providers, schools and many other entities, including optometrists and ophthalmologists. SBVI continues to discuss and identify who our target audience is, and where we need to focus our outreach efforts to increase awareness and referrals.

Strategy 2.4: Annually review and update outreach materials and procedures that staff utilize to promote services to referral sources, employers, and other entities: In PY2020, a Fact Sheet was created with the target audience of ophthalmologists and providers. The intent of the fact sheet is to increase awareness of SBVI services, focusing on employment-related services that can be provided to their patients who may benefit from the SBVI program. These continue to be distributed by field office staff in local communities to increase understanding of SBVI services that could benefit their patients.

Goal 3: Ensure that Vocational Rehabilitation clients receive services that allow for informed choice and help them to improve their ability to communicate, interact, and perform to their potential in their community.

Strategy 3.1: Develop assistive technology training resources to improve accessibility for individuals who are blind or

visually impaired, including those with most significant disabilities: The Board of SBVI Assistive Technology Advisory Committee regularly reviews the assistive technology resource guide. This information is disseminated to those served by SBVI and is available on the Division web site. The Assistive Technology (AT) Specialist at the South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind has implemented training options including designated times for walk-in or call-in technical assistance and training. The SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind hosts “First Fridays” each month offering seminars on a variety of topics, including AT training. The Assistive Technology Access Project covers costs for up to five hours of training from DakotaLink, the state assistive technology project. This allows current and former clients to get assistance as technology changes and new options for access become available.

Strategy 3.2: Increase the provision of independent living and social skills training when necessary to VR clients to ensure that they have the skills necessary to obtain employment: The SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind incorporates independent living and social skills into the curriculum for those who participate in training including youth with vision loss who attend Transition Week. SBVI Rehabilitation Teachers provide hands-on training to assist clients to overcome barriers by learning alternative techniques to increase their confidence and independence. Field Rehabilitation Teachers provide services in the home and the workplace on a statewide basis. Peer support groups have also been established in many communities around the state, and Rehabilitation Teachers participate in those meetings on a regular basis. When Covid-19 occurred, these peer support groups moved to a virtual platform, utilizing Zoom for those who wanted to continue to participate and support each other during that time. The virtual platform has proven to be very effective and efficient, allowing peers to support each other statewide, instead of in small local groups. SBVI has been assisting one student to participate in Augie Access at Augustana University for the third year. Students with developmental disabilities can attend this three-year post-secondary program. SBVI, along with the General VR agency in South Dakota have offered funding opportunities to Local Education Agencies and community providers during the summertime for training opportunities relevant to Pre-ETS for students with disabilities. Areas that are required to be included in the curriculum include job exploration activities, workplace Readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and information about vocational rehabilitation services and other programs available to assist individuals with disabilities. During the summer of 2020, a total of 96 participants or students were involved in the trainings, 71 are currently receiving VR services, and 25 are potentially eligible for VR services.

Strategy 3.3: Promote access to programs and services in the statewide workforce investment system: SBVI works with the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) through a memorandum of understanding that outlines roles and responsibilities of vocational rehabilitation and other programs in the state workforce investment system. The Core Partner Alignment Consortium (CPAC) includes all WIOA core partners, and we have established quarterly meetings to discuss ongoing joint activities in the state, as well as opportunities to collaborate better together. With most of our offices co-located with the Dept. of Labor, conversations focus on how to best meet the needs of our clients in those locations, discuss joint cases and referral processes, and plan outreach activities and trainings together. Training is conducted for audiences at the annual vocational rehabilitation conference to offer the opportunity for them to learn about Dept. of Labor services. Local Integrated Resource Teams have been established to bring together local core partners to discuss efforts to collaborate at the local level and work together with identified clients who need more intensive employment services to be successfully employed.

Strategy 3.4: Serve at least 5 individuals in Supported Employment to ensure services are comprehensive and have long term supports: Training has been provided to SBVI staff on supported employment strategies, motivational interviewing and person-centered planning which resulted in counselors providing supported employment services and identifying long terms supports for 15 clients in PY2019, and 14 clients in PY2020. With lack of Supported Employment funds, SBVI continues to provide services to those clients with most significant disabilities through regular VR funding.

Goal 4: Strengthen the agency’s ability to provide quality services to the ever-changing minority populations that exist in South Dakota.

Strategy 4.1: Maintain regular contact with Native American Nations and minority service agencies to increase awareness of services that are available: SBVI and DRS regularly schedule meetings designed to continue the positive

strides that have been made over the past years in coordinating services and promoting the employment of Native American citizens who are blind or visually impaired. A meeting between Tribal VR and State VR programs occurred in May 2021. Representatives from Standing Rock, Rosebud, and Cheyenne River Tribal VR programs met with South Dakota General and Blind VR agencies and discussion was held regarding their progress or status of 121 grants and funding availability. Letters of support were recommended, and joint case cost sharing was discussed. These meetings are another opportunity to meet and discuss issues that arise and opportunities to collaborate. SBVI also has had an informational booth each year at the Lakota Nation Invitational basketball tournament held in Rapid City which is a forum for information dissemination to all of the state Tribes.

Strategy 4.2: Collaborate with tribal VR programs to ensure that all eligible individuals are served in an effective and efficient manner on reservations and tribal lands: SBVI utilizes the cooperative agreements that are in place with Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs as a guide when coordinating services on reservations and tribal lands. VR cooperative agreements were signed in June 2020 with the Standing Rock Tribal VR program, in March 2021 with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Tribal VR program, and in May 2021 with the new Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribal VR Program. SBVI staff travel to provide regular staff presence in the Kyle and Pine Ridge offices located on the Pine Ridge Reservation, Eagle Butte on the Cheyenne River Reservation, McLaughlin on the Standing Rock Reservation, Lower Brule Reservation and Mission on the Rosebud Reservation to educate people on State VR services, take applications for those interested in services, and meet with Tribal VR to discuss and plan services for joint cases. During Covid, many of the reservations have been closed to people not living on the reservation. However, some VR staff have been approved to travel to provide services to clients living on the reservations. Many of the Tribal VR staff have travel restricted due to the current Covid-19 impact in their communities.

Strategy 4.3: Provide bi-annual training to agency staff to provide tools for meeting the cultural and linguistic needs of culturally diverse populations: Training to address cultural and linguistic needs of diverse populations was delivered through collaboration with local agencies and the Tribal VR Programs. In October 2021, the Oyate' Circle presented to the general audience of approximately 250 attendees of the annual fall conference. Their presentation was Changing Our Perspective on Indigenous People with a Disability and provided the audience with new and innovative approaches in working with Tribal members with disabilities and their family members. They also presented during a breakout session on Innovative Services for Native American Youth with Disabilities, which covered the support services at Lakota Tech High School. During the luncheon, Dallas Chief Eagle II performed Lakota hoop dancing and storytelling.

Goal 5: Provide quality transition services to eligible students that facilitate the students' movement from school to post-secondary education and/or employment and results in successful employment.

Strategy 5.1: Continue transition activities and services, such as Project Skills, Project Search, the Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave, and SBVI Transition Week, which provide students with valuable experience and skills needed to move from school to employment: For transition age clients with vision loss, 30 transition activities and services were provided to SBVI students in PY 2019 and 18 students in PY2020. SBVI has seen a decrease in transition participants for multiple reasons. Covid prevented students from employment in the community, and many schools provided education remotely. SBVI has a contract with the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with vision loss. The school has been challenged to hire the staff needed to provide these services on a consistent basis. As a result, some students have employment experience services on their individualized plan for employment, but the school has had to postpone services until staff could get hired.

Strategy 5.2: Develop additional mentoring opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired: Mentoring activities were planned in conjunction with Transition Week at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind through participation of SBVI Board members in transition and job exploration activities. SBVI staff who are blind or visually impaired serve as mentors for citizens with recent loss of vision.

Strategy 5.3: Collaborate with the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Transition Specialist to provide

statewide education to teachers, students, and family members about services available to students through SBVI: SBVI collaborates and provides oversight to ensure that enhanced VR services, including pre-employment transition services, are being provided to SBVI transition age youth. The SBVI Assistant Director serves on the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Advisory Council. The Transition Specialist also serves on the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. In PY2020, a meeting was held with the Transition Specialist for the SD School for the Blind, SBVI VR counselors and administrative staff, as well as SD School for the Blind Outreach consultants who are located in communities around the state, providing services to students who are blind or visually impaired in their school and community. This meeting involved gaining increased knowledge about the role of each individual, ensuring transition of students and referral to apply for vocational rehabilitation services is occurring, and referring to SBVI those students who are potentially eligible to provide pre-employment transition services.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The state unemployment rate affects achievement of goals and priorities. When the unemployment rate is low, there is a decrease in applicants for services. In addition, there has been a decrease in the number of individuals accessing assistive technology training at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. Covid-19 has had a major impact on SBVI achieving some goals and priorities. Many individuals lost their employment or ended their employment due to the potential of getting the virus.

(2) An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

(A) Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.

SBVI is committed to ensuring that rehabilitation services are made available on a statewide basis to individuals with the most significant disabilities who have not traditionally been competitively employed or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent. SBVI does not receive a supported employment Title VI Part B allotment. Instead, Title I vocational rehabilitation funds are authorized to providers of the client's choice; the amount of funds authorized is based upon the individual's needs, type of placement, hours, and type of employment. A new initiative was developed in the Fall 2018 to develop more expertise among VR counselors and provider agencies in customized employment. This training has been ongoing, and the fee schedule has been revised to address customized employment as a more specialized service, and as such, is reimbursed at a higher rate.

(B) Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The state's low unemployment rate affects achievement of goals and priorities. When the unemployment rate is high, there is an increase in applicants for services as well as increased difficulty with finding competitive employment. Covid-19 had a major impact on SBVI achieving some goals and priorities. Many individuals lost their employment or ended their employment due to the potential of getting the virus. Some also chose to not meet with SBVI staff and took a "break" from services while Covid 19 numbers increased in the state.

(3) The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

There are six primary indicators of performance under section 116 of WIOA:

- **Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit);
 - 53.9% of participants were employed during the second quarter after exit from the program for PY2019
 - 52.6% of participants were employed during the second quarter after exit from the program for PY2020

- **Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit);
 - 50.4% of participants were employed during the fourth quarter after exit from the program for PY2019
 - 46.1% of participants were employed during the fourth quarter after exit from the program for PY2020
- **Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The median earnings of participants who were in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
 - For PY2019, the median earnings of participants employed during the second quarter after exit was \$2,782.
 - For PY2020, the median earnings of participants employed during the second quarter after exit was \$2,860.
- **Credential Attainment:** The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;
 - In PY2019, 23.8% of participants attained postsecondary credentials or a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) during participation in or within one year after exit from the program.
 - In PY2020, 34.5% of participants attained postsecondary credentials or a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. While we have seen improvement in this area, South Dakota is making ongoing efforts to train staff for better understanding of credential attainment and obtaining documentation of participant progress. It is expected that this percentage will continue to increase with improved data collection.
- **Measurable Skill Gains:** The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.
 - In PY2019, 53.9% of participants obtained measurable skill gains leading to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment.
 - In PY2020, 21.5% of participants obtained measurable skill gains leading to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment. This percentage is expected to increase in conjunction with staff training. This was below our 45.7% expected level of performance, but sanctions were not implemented for PY2020 as RSA felt that the data received to established levels of performance was not accurate enough to proceed with at this time based on data received this year. Like with credential attainment, additional training and clarification has been provided to staff and it is anticipated that this will increase the appropriate data collection/documentation of MSG's.
- **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** addresses the program's efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time.
 - For PY2019, a total of 182 businesses were served;
 - For PY2020, a total of 453 businesses were served, a 40% increase from the previous year.

(4) How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized.

The Rehabilitation Act requires that a portion of funds be reserved for innovation and expansion activities. The Division of SBVI works with the Board to prioritize these activities. The Board of SBVI utilizes the Division senior secretary for support of Board activities due to the limited resources available for personnel. Activities supported by the Board of SBVI were as follows:

- 1: Costs associated with Board Member attendance at quarterly meetings;

- 2: Public Meeting promotion and facilitation (to gather input on the need to expand services, especially for individuals with the most significant disabilities);
- 3: Client Satisfaction Surveys;
- 4: Joint activities with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council;
- 5: National Disability Employment Awareness Month Activities;
- 6: Workshop registration and travel expenses for Board Members attendance at agency training, and client conventions;
- 7: Education and outreach to promote the capabilities of citizens with vision loss and services offered by SBVI;
- 8: Workshop registration and travel expenses for clients' attendance at state conventions of client organizations;
- 9: Other activities approved by the Board of SBVI to address agency goals and strategies.

Board members participate in prioritizing innovation and expansion activities which impact citizens who are blind or visually impaired. Innovation and expansion funds are used in accordance with priorities in the Rehabilitation Act as amended.

q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. *Include the following:*

- (1) The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.*

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) provides services to individuals with the most significant disabilities including youth with the most significant disabilities who require intensive support to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment. The services are designed to meet the current and future needs of these individuals whose disabilities are of such a nature that they need continuous, on-going support and extended services in order to engage in and maintain gainful employment. SBVI provides services including evaluation, assessment, job matching, job development, job placement, job coaching, and training for natural supports including extended services and other comprehensive follow along supports.

Ensuring that quality supported employment (SE) services are being provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities in South Dakota is a priority for the Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. SBVI works in collaboration with the South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) to ensure the supported employment services incorporate key values such as self-determinism, informed choice, person-centered supports, quality of life, and full inclusion.

SBVI and DRS provide training to VR counselors and supported employment service providers to ensure quality services. The South Dakota Center for Disabilities provides training for supported employment service providers in South Dakota through an agreement with vocational rehabilitation.

Divisions of DRS and SBVI implemented a 25% higher reimbursement rate to supported employment service providers who obtain a Certified Employment Support Professional credentials and participate in a two-day person-centered planning training. In addition, the Divisions sponsor and arrange trainings to help service providers improve their service ability and maintain their continued education credits.

In September of 2018, SBVI began receiving training from Griffin-Hammis Associates for Customized Employment training to vocational rehabilitation counselors, supervisors and employment service providers to increase knowledge and expertise in service delivery to better meet the needs of individuals with more significant limitations to employment. This will make available a new kind of service that will allow staff to personalize the job search and placement process resulting in increased successful outcomes for those who could not be served or who were not well served by more traditional services in the past.

- (2) The timing of transition to extended services.*

The State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies (DRS and SBVI) provide time-limited services needed to support an

individual in employment. Vocational Rehabilitation can fund up to 24 months of follow along services unless the Individual Plan for Employment indicates that more than 24 months of services are necessary for the individual to achieve job stability prior to transitioning to extended services. For individuals who are youth with the most significant disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation can fund a maximum of 48 months of job coaching and follow-along services.

Prior to the purchase of supported employment services, the need for the services, the appropriate extended services and funding, and the appropriate agency for service provision are established and identified on the IPE. The transition to the extended services (long term funding source) occurs when 18 months of job coaching and follow along services have been provided or earlier if the following three requirements are met: The individual's employment is stable; The individual has met the hourly goal of employment established in the IPE; and the extended services are immediate without any interruption in the provision of the ongoing services to maintain employment.

If the IPE indicates that more than 24 months of services are necessary for the individual to achieve job stability, the time-limited services of job coaching and follow along can exceed 24 months. After the individual has transitioned to extended employment, the individual must maintain employment for at least 90 days prior to case closure.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES CERTIFICATIONS

States must provide written and signed certifications that:	
1.	The (enter the name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate,) is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act;
2.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the (enter the name of designated State agency) ¹⁶ agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan ¹⁷ , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations ¹⁸ , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
3.	As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan ¹⁹ , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations ²⁰ , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
4.	The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
5.	The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.
6.	All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
7.	The (enter title of State officer below) has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
8.	The (enter title of State officer below) has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;
9.	The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

The State Plan must provide assurances that:	
1.	Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2.	Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
3.	Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act. (b) the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) is an independent State commission.

	<p>(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council.</p> <p>(c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(d) the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).</p> <p>(e) the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds, (Yes/No)</p> <p>(f) the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs, (Yes/No)</p> <p>(g) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan.</p> <p>(h) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(i) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(j) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(k) the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(l) the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.</p> <p>(m) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
4.	<p>Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:</p> <p>(a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(c) provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)</p> <p>(d) determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(f) comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs</p> <p>(j) with respect to students with disabilities, the State,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(i) has developed and will implement,</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">(A) strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">(B) strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and</p> <p>has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25)).</p>
5.	<p>Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:</p> <p>(a) The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(c) The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.</p>
6.	<p>(a) Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program: The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
7.	<p>(a) Provision of Supported Employment Services: The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p> <p>(b) The designated State agency assures that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in</p>

	<p>accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act</p> <p>(c) an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act , which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.</p>
--	--

APPENDIX

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Memorandum of Understanding between Local Board and One-Stop Partners (Includes IFA Budget for State Fiscal Year 2018)

Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021: Employment (Second Quarter after Exit); Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); Credential Attainment Rate; and Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021: Employment (Second Quarter after Exit); Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021: Employment (Second Quarter after Exit); Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Include the state's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

	TITLE I – ADULT PROGRAM			
	Program Year: 2022		Program Year: 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	75%		76%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	72%		72%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$5000		\$5100	
Credential Attainment Rate	60%		62%	
Measurable Skill Gains	45%		47%	

	TITLE I – DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM			
	Program Year: 2022		Program Year: 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	75%		78%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	78%		78%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$6950		\$7000	
Credential Attainment Rate	65.3%		66.4%	
Measurable Skill Gains	43.9%		43.9%	

	TITLE I – YOUTH PROGRAM			
	Program Year: 2022		Program Year: 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	72%		71.4%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	71%		69.4%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$3600		\$3700	
Credential Attainment Rate	50%		50%	
Measurable Skill Gains	49%		49%	

	TITLE II – ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM			
	Program Year: 2022		Program Year: 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	49%		50%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	49%		50%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$6,900		\$7,000	
Credential Attainment Rate	39%		40%	
Measurable Skill Gains	39%		40%	

	WAGNER-PEYSER ACT EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM			
	Program Year: 2022		Program Year: 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	65%		71%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	63%		62.4%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$4900		\$4900	
Credential Attainment Rate	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
Measurable Skill Gains	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>

	VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM			
	Program Year: 2020		Program Year: 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	43.7%	45.7%	44.8%	46.8%

Memorandum of Understanding between Local Board and One-Stop Partners

Scanned images of the document are below. This agreement is with the following entities and each entity has reviewed and signed the agreement: The South Dakota Workforce Development Council, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, South Dakota Department of Human Services, Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, South Dakota Department of Social Services, Experience Works, Inc., National Indian Council on Aging, Inc., The Board of Technical Education, U.S. Forest Service (Job Corps), United Sioux Tribes of South Dakota Development Corporation, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe (Sicangu Nation), Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, and Yankton Sioux Tribe.



SOUTH DAKOTA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

American Job Center Memorandum of Understanding

July 1, 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Legal Authority
Memorandum of Understanding
Vision
System Structure <i>One-Stop Career Centers, One-Stop Operator, One-Stop Partners</i>
Operating Budget
Data Sharing
Confidentiality
Accessibility
Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity
Indemnification
Governing Law <i>Dispute and Impasse Resolution</i>
Modification Process
Effective Period

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) §121(c)(1) requires the Local Board, with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official (CEO), to develop and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Local Board and the One-Stop Partners, consistent with WIOA §121(c)(2), concerning the operation of the One-Stop System in a local area. This requirement is further described in WIOA, Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, the American Job Center Network Joint Provisions: Final Rule at 20 CFR 678.500, 34 CFR 361.500, and 34 CFR 463.500, and in federal guidance.

Additionally, the sharing and allocation of infrastructure costs among One-Stop Partners is governed by WIOA §121(h), its implementing regulations, and the Federal Cost Principles contained in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 CFR 200.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Changing labor markets and advances in technology have revolutionized employee recruitment and job seeking. Social media, online talent platforms, and professional networking sites are evolving rapidly, perpetuating shifts in labor market dynamics. Rising consumer expectations and global competition have transformed how business is conducted in most industries. Employers must move faster and more efficiently to compete for talent. It is imperative for public workforce systems to continuously adapt and reframe strategies and policies designed to support employers and job seekers.

The Workforce Development Council (WDC), South Dakota's Local Board, provides oversight of workforce programming for South Dakota. The Council seeks to establish a system to contrast the traditional transaction-based model, whereby each agency operates its own workforce services functions and participants physically move from place-to-place seeking services. Instead, the goal is to create integrated locations and a unified structure and process of proactive, transparent, and effective job seeker and business services, orchestrated by a seamless collaboration of talent development and support agencies.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to define the parameters within which education, workforce, economic development, and other partner programs and entities operating in South Dakota to create a seamless, customer-focused One-Stop System service delivery across the board to enhance access to program services. One-Stop Partners build community-benefiting bridges, rather than silos of programmatic isolation. These partnerships will reduce administrative burden and costs, and increase customer access and performance outcomes.

This MOU is executed between the WDC and the One-Stop Partners, collectively referred to as the "Parties" to this MOU. This MOU is developed to confirm the understanding of the Parties regarding the operation and management of the 12 One-Stop Career Centers in the WDC service area of South Dakota.

VISION

To provide services for job seekers, individuals who desire to improve their skills and better themselves, and to partner with businesses to best meet their workforce needs through education and training. Specific goals and strategies are outlined in the South Dakota Unified State Plan.

SYSTEM STRUCTURE

American Job Center

Comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers

Comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers include those locations with the four WIOA core programs co-located in one building. Core programs include those listed in WIOA §3 (13).

Affiliate One-Stop Career Centers

Locations that do not meet the Comprehensive One-Stop definition, but have a combination of three or more WIOA core programs and WIOA required partners co-located in one building could qualify as an Affiliate One-Stop Career Center.

Locations with access to one or more of the WIOA core programs or required partners are part of the One-Stop Delivery System, but do not meet the definition of a One-Stop comprehensive or affiliate site.

A directory of One-Stop Career Centers in South Dakota, referred to publicly as “Job Service offices,” can be found at sdjobs.org. All One-Stop Career Centers, comprehensive and affiliate, are available for services Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. One-Stop Career Centers must identify as a “proud partner of the American Job Center Network” through primary electronic resources, printed materials, and facility signage.

One-Stop Operator

The One-Stop Operator is the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) Division of Field Operations Director. The WDC selected the One-Stop Operator through a competitive process in accordance with the Uniform Guidance¹, WIOA implementing regulations, and State procurement laws and regulations. The One-Stop Operator selection process must be re-completed at least once every four years.

Services

Services identified in **Attachment A** will be made available at the One-Stop comprehensive and affiliate sites through direct linkage.

Direct linkage means providing direct connection at the One-Stop Career Center to a program staff member who can provide program information or services to the customer within a reasonable time, by phone or through real-time web-based communication. It cannot exclusively be providing a phone number, website, information, or materials for access at a later date or time.

Services of all partners, **Attachment B**, will be shared with customers entering the One-Stop Career Center.

Referrals

A referral system is necessary to provide integrated and seamless delivery of services to workers, job seekers, and employers. In order to facilitate such a system, comprehensive and affiliate One-Stop Career Centers agree to coordinate referrals through direct linkage. Partners agree to:

- Familiarize themselves with the basic eligibility and participation requirements, as well as with the available services and benefits offered, for each of the partners programs represented in the One-Stop System,
- Develop materials summarizing their program requirements and make them available for partners and customers,
- Work towards common intake forms, eligibility determination, assessments, and registration forms,
- Provide substantive referrals to customers who are eligible for supplemental and complementary services and benefits under partner programs,

¹ Federal Cost Principles contained in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR part 200 (Uniform Guidance), including the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) approved exceptions for the U.S. DOL at 2 CFR part 2900.

- Regularly evaluate ways to improve the referral process, including the use of customer satisfaction surveys,
- Commit to robust and ongoing communication required for an effective referral process, and
- Commit to actively follow up on the results of referrals and ensure partner resources are being leveraged at an optimal level.

OPERATING BUDGET

The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) contains the infrastructure costs budget and is a component of the overall operating budget for the One-Stop comprehensive and affiliate locations. The IFA is part of the American Job Center Memorandum of Understanding and operates in conjunction with agreements entered into with other State and Federal agencies, including agreements between State agencies such as DLR and the South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS), negotiated annually to fund programs.

Infrastructure costs of One-Stop Career Center locations are defined as non-personnel costs, including physical location costs and virtual network costs, necessary for the general operation. For South Dakota, the infrastructure costs are:

Physical Location Costs

- Rent
- Janitorial
- Electrical utility
- Garbage/sewer
- Water utility
- Natural gas
- Other facility costs, including but not limited to landscaping, snow removal, or facility equipment

Virtual Network Costs

- Computer services
- Telecommunications

Partners

DLR represents and administers the following required partner programs: WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Unemployment Insurance Compensation, Jobs for Veterans State Grants, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Career Services (in agreement with DSS), and Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFL).

Other partners co-located in our One-Stop Career Centers are the South Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Rehabilitation Services (VR), DHS Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI), and the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) administered by the Black Hills Special Services Cooperative.

Other partners not located in a One-Stop Career Center include Job Corps Center (administered by the U.S. Forest Service), Career and Technical Education program (administered by the South Dakota Board of Technical Education), SCSEP (administered by The National Indian Council on Aging, Inc), SCSEP Experience Works, and Native American Programs administered by the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Whapeton Sioux Tribe, United Sioux Tribes, and Yankton Sioux Tribes.

Infrastructure Budget

See [Attachment A](#). The budget is established on a Fiscal Year basis, July 1 to June 30. The budget is based on historical costs from previous Fiscal Year expenditures and will be adjusted within the first 60 days of each Fiscal Year.

Cost Allocation Methodology

Physical Location Costs

Allocation of the physical location costs is based upon square footage utilization of the partner by each location respectively. Costs are further allocated to various DLR programs based on the indirect cost agreement entered into with the U.S. DOL, Office of Cost Determination.

Virtual Network Costs

Costs for computer services and telecommunications services are allocated directly to the co-located partner whom the account is established. Costs are then allocated to the non-located partners based on the cost per direct linkage. Direct linkage means providing direct connection at the One-Stop Career Center, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time web-based communication to a non-located partner program staff member who can provide program information or services to the customer. It cannot exclusively be providing a phone number, website, information, or materials for access at a later date or time.

Direct linkage is the identified benefit to the non-located One-Stop Partners. Direct linkage is tracked as a Coordinated Referral Service in the SDWORKS information system. In November and May, DLR will assess the non-located partners and send invoices for benefits received based on the number of coordinated service referrals recorded in SDWORKS. Partners will have 30 days to pay the invoice to DLR.

The cost per direct linkage is calculated by determining the cost per minute of a DLR employee's telephone and computer costs, then adding the per-minute cost of making a phone call, then multiplying by 15 minutes, which is the anticipated average length of a direct linkage conversation between a participant and the non-located partner.

Formula: $[(.015762 \text{ DLR cost} + .08 \text{ phone charge/minute}) \times 15 \text{ minutes} = \$1.44 \text{ per referral}]$

The cost per minute for DLR is calculated by adding the four monthly South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) charges related to virtual costs (user fee, access fee, information management fee, and telephone line), multiplying by the number of months in the year, then dividing by the number of work minutes for a DLR employee less holidays. BIT rates can be viewed at: bit.sd.gov/finance/, from the "Rate Sheet" link on the left hand side.

Formula: $(19+57.75+27+54.50) \times 12 / (2080 \text{ hours} \times 60 \text{ minutes} - 10 \text{ days} \times 8 \text{ hours} \times 60 \text{ minutes}) = 0.15762$

Each non-located partner receiving a quarterly bill from DLR for virtual network costs will also be charged a \$10.81 processing fee. This is comprised of the accounting transactions, revenue documents, and voucher audit fees charged DLR for the processing of vouchers.

Native American Programs

The Native American Programs administered by the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton-Whapeton Sioux Tribe, United Sioux Tribes, and Yankton Sioux Tribes are not contributing to the infrastructure costs of the One-Stop Career Centers according to WIOA § 121(h)(2)(D)(iv).

Cost Reconciliation and Modification Process

Actual costs will be reviewed and reconciled with the budget in November and May each year. The budget will be revised as necessary. Affected One-Stop Partners will be notified of any budget modifications in excess of 15 percent. If a partner wants to modify the IFA, the partner will submit a notice to all affected partners 60 days prior to intended implementation of the modification. All partners involved must negotiate the modification and reach agreement prior to the modification taking effect. Only partners who are affected by the substantive budget modifications need to sign for changes made to the budget. Non-substantive changes (less than 15 percent) made to the budget do not require renewal of the MOU or updated signatures.

Steps to Reach Consensus

Each partner was informally notified regarding the need to enter into an infrastructure funding agreement. For DLR, VR, and NFJP partners, this does not deviate from the previously established cost allocation methodology utilized for these programs. AEFL subrecipient partners were notified of the cost allocation change during the request for proposal process initiated for the coming years' grants. The remaining required partners first met regarding the IFA in June of 2017. The partners reconvened in October of 2017 to review the methodology for allocating virtual costs for the One-Stop Career Center.

Effective Period

This IFA is in effect at the same period of time as the MOU.

Attachment C includes the details for the One-Stop System infrastructure agreement.

DATA SHARING

Data share agreements amongst partners will be developed as necessary, but not be a part of this MOU.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All Parties expressly agree to abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding confidential information, including Personal Identifiable Information (PII) from educational records such as, but not limited to, 20 CFR 603, 45 CFR 205.50, 20 U.S. Code §1232g, 34 CFR 99, 34 CFR 361.38, and any applicable state and local laws and regulations. In addition, in carrying out their respective responsibilities, Parties shall respect and abide by the confidentiality policies and legal requirements of all of the other Parties.

Parties will ensure the collection and use of any information, systems, or records containing PII and other personal or confidential information will be to support the programs and activities described in this MOU and will comply with applicable laws.

Parties will ensure access to software systems and files under its control and containing PII or other personal or confidential information will be limited to authorized staff members assigned responsibilities in support of the services and activities described herein, and will comply with applicable laws. Parties expressly agrees to take measures to ensure PII or other personal or confidential information is inaccessible by unauthorized individuals.

Confidential, private, or otherwise protected information which needs to be shared amongst the Parties for the Parties' performance of their obligations under this MOU, and to the extent that such sharing is permitted by applicable laws, appropriate data sharing agreements will be created. Required confidentiality and ethical certifications will be signed by authorized individuals. With respect to confidential unemployment insurance information, any such data sharing must comply with all of the requirements in 20 CFR 603, including but not limited to requirements for an agreement consistent with 20 CFR 603.10, payments of costs, and permissible disclosures.

With respect to the use and disclosure of customer education records protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the PII contained therein, any such data sharing agreement must comply with all of the requirements set forth in 20 U.S. Code §1232g and 34 CFR 99.

With respect to the use and disclosure of personal information contained in VR records, any such data sharing agreement must comply with all of the requirements set forth in 34 CFR 361.38.

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility to the services provided by the One-Stop Career Centers and all partner agencies is essential to meeting the

requirements and goals of the One-Stop System. Job seekers and businesses must be able to access all relevant information by visiting physical locations and connecting through virtual spaces. This includes communication and programmatic accessibility regardless of gender, age, race, religion, national origin, disability, veteran's status, or on the basis of any other classification protected under state or federal law.

Physical Accessibility

One-Stop Career Centers will maintain a culture of inclusiveness and the physical characteristics of the facility, both indoor and outdoor, will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Services will be available in a convenient, high traffic, and accessible location, taking into account reasonable distance from public transportation and adequate parking (including parking clearly marked for individuals with disabilities). Indoor space will be designed in an "equal and meaningful" manner providing access for individuals with disabilities.

Virtual Accessibility

Partners should strive to offer as many services as possible virtually. Partners should have their own online presence, a website and/or social media profiles. If appropriate, partners may choose to link information to each other's websites. Virtual services must meet accessibility standards. Information must be clearly marked and compliant with Section 508 of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services code. Partners will comply with the Plain Writing Act of 2010, requiring federal agencies use "clear Government communication that the public can understand and use" and all information kept virtually will be updated regularly to ensure dissemination of correct information.

Communication Accessibility

Communications access, for purposes of this MOU, means individuals with sensory disabilities can communicate (and be communicated with) on an equal footing with those who do not have such disabilities. All Parties agree to provide accommodations for individuals who have communication challenges, including but not limited to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, individuals with vision impairments, and individuals with speech-language impairments.

Programmatic Accessibility

All Parties agree to not discriminate in their employment practices or services on the basis of gender, gender identity and/or expression, age, race, religion, national origin, disability, veteran's status, or on the basis of any other classification protected under state or federal law. Partners must ensure they have policies and procedures in place to address these issues, and such policies and procedures are disseminated to their employees and otherwise posted as required by law. Partners further assure they are currently in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding these issues. All Parties will cooperate with compliance monitoring conducted to ensure all One-Stop Career Center programs, services, technology, and materials are physically and programmatically accessible and available to all. Additionally, staff members will be trained to provide services to all, regardless of range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, or comprehension or education level. An interpreter will be provided in real time or, if not available, within a reasonable timeframe to any customer with a language barrier. Assistive devices, such as screen-reading software programs (e.g., JAWS and DRAGON), and assistive listening devices must be available to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility within One-Stop System.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

All Parties to this MOU certify they prohibit, and will continue to prohibit, discrimination, and certify no person, otherwise qualified, is denied employment, services, or other benefits on the basis of: (i) political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification and/or expression, race, color, creed, or national origin; (ii) sex or age, except when age or sex constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification; or (iii) the physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability.

The Parties specifically agree to comply with WIOA §188, Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Regulations (29 CFR 38; Final Rule December 2, 2016), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S. Code §12101 et seq.), the Non-traditional Employment for Women Act of 1991, Civil Rights of 1964 Title VI and Title VII, as amended, the Rehabilitation Act of

1973 §504, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1967, as amended, the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, as amended, and with all applicable requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29 CFR 37 and 38.

INDEMNIFICATION

All Parties to this MOU recognize the partnership consists of various levels of government, not-for-profit, and for-profit entities. Each party to this agreement shall be responsible for injury to persons or damage to property resulting from negligence on the part of itself, its employees, its agents, or its officers. No Partner assumes any responsibility for any other party, State or non-State, for the consequences of any act or omission of any third party. The Parties acknowledge the WDC and the one-stop operator have no responsibility and/or liability for any actions of the One-Stop Career Center employees, agents, and/or assignees. Likewise, the Parties have no responsibility and/or liability for any actions of the WDC or the One-Stop Operator.

If any part of this MOU is found to be null and void or is otherwise stricken, the rest of this MOU shall remain in force.

GOVERNING LAW

Dispute and Impasse Resolution

All Parties will actively participate in good faith effort to reach agreement. Disputes between Parties will be attempted to be resolved informally. If a resolution is not found, the Parties will send a written letter to the Executive Director of the WDC. The Executive Director will have 10 days to acknowledge receipt of the dispute and transmit the letter to the Council members. The WDC then has 30 business days to convene and hear testimony from all Parties involved in the dispute. After hearing testimony, WDC has an additional 30 business days to issue a formal resolution for the issue. The final resolution will be issued by the WDC Chair.

MODIFICATION PROCESS

Any partner may request changes in this MOU. Non-substantive changes to the MOU, such as adjustments of less than 15 percent to the budget made during the reconciliation of the budget, do not require renewal of the MOU. Other changes, modifications, revisions or amendments to this MOU must be mutually agreed upon by between the Parties to this MOU and shall be incorporated by written instrument, executed and signed by all Parties to this MOU.

EFFECTIVE PERIOD

This MOU is entered into on July 1, 2017. This MOU will become effective as of the date of signing by the final signatory below and must terminate on June 30, 2020. All Parties agree this MOU shall be reviewed and renewed not less than once every three years to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services.

IFA BUDGET FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2018

One-Stop Location:	Aberdeen				Office
<u>Infrastructure Cost</u>	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	49,554		877		50,431
Computer Services	-		-		-
Telecommunications	-		-		-
Janitorial	4,055		78		4,133
Electrical	1,012		14		1,026
Garbage/Sewer	744		10		754
Water	65		2		67
Natural Gas	535		7		542
Other Facility Costs	995		13		1,008
Total:	56,959	-	1,001	-	57,961
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>3,629</i>		<i>844</i>		<i>4,473</i>
<i>Notes: DLR Field Operations pays 16.80% and AEL 2.72% of utility and janitorial costs of the building. Space is occupied by other tenants and DLR programs.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Brookings				Office
<u>Infrastructure Cost</u>	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	-	-	-		-
Computer Services	30,549	579	-		31,128
Telecommunications	7,873	149	-		8,022
Janitorial	8,530	-	-		8,530
Electrical	5,972	123	-		6,095
Garbage/Sewer	-	-	-		-
Water	-	-	-		-
Natural Gas	-	-	-		-
Other Facility Costs	6,681	127	-		6,808
Total:	59,606	977	8,580	-	60,584
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>4,874</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>900</i>		<i>5,926</i>
<i>Notes: DLR pays 98.14% and VR 1.86% of utility and janitorial costs of the shared suite. AEFLA is a separately leased suite space which the landlord currently funds the utilities.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Huron				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	24,891	3,247			28,139
Computer Services	23,335	3,044			26,379
Telecommunications	7,470	974			8,444
Janitorial	6,780	885			7,665
Electrical	1,658	216			1,874
Garbage/Sewer	435	57			492
Water	175	-			175
Natural Gas	180	24			204
Other Facility Costs	9,317	1,215			10,532
Total:	74,241	9,662	-	-	83,904
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>2,400</i>	<i>313</i>			<i>2,713</i>
<i>Notes: DLR pays 88.46% and VR 11.54% of utility and janitorial costs of a shared space.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Madison				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	32,557				32,557
Computer Services	9,493				9,493
Telecommunications	2,758				2,758
Janitorial	6,288				6,288
Electrical	1,611				1,611
Garbage/Sewer	116				116
Water	45				45
Natural Gas	77				77
Other Facility Costs	2,126				2,126
Total:	55,072	-	-	-	55,072
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>5,319</i>				<i>5,319</i>
<i>Notes: DLR pays 64.46% of the utilities and janitorial costs of the leased space. The remainder of space and utilities are paid by non-partner State agencies.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Mitchell				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	49,899	1,175			51,074
Computer Services	30,376	715			31,091
Telecommunications	5,944	140			6,084
Janitorial	13,859	326			14,186
Electrical	4,813	113			4,927
Garbage/Sewer	589	14			603
Water	823	19			843
Natural Gas	113	3			116
Other Facility Costs	19,220	452			19,672
Total:	125,638	2,958	-	-	128,595
Square Footage	4,582	108			4,690
<i>Notes: DLR pays 97.7% and VR 2.3% of utility and janitorial costs of a shared space. AEFLA leases its own space which includes the costs for utilities in the lease payment.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Pierre				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	53,642				53,642
Computer Services	29,027				29,027
Telecommunications	7,956				7,956
Janitorial	11,220				11,220
Electrical	3,454				3,454
Garbage/Sewer	960				960
Water	302				302
Natural Gas	725				725
Other Facility Costs	2,650				2,650
Total:	109,937	-	-	-	109,937
Square Footage	5,210				5,210
<i>Notes: DLR pays 100% of utility costs of a space which isn't currently shared with other agencies or entities.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Rapid City				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	180,463	38,013			218,476
Computer Services	95,218	20,057			115,276
Telecommunications	18,897	3,980			34,063
Janitorial	28,137	5,927			34,063
Electrical	14,533	3,061			17,595
Garbage/Sewer	1,604	338			1,942
Water	507	107			613
Natural Gas	2,938	619			3,557
Other Facility Costs	1,731	365			2,096
Total:	344,028	72,467	-	-	416,495
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>17,817</i>	<i>3,754</i>			<i>21,571</i>
Notes: VR has a separate lease with the landlord, but utility costs are on one bill which DLR receives. DLR pays 79.63% and VR pays 16.77% of utility costs. DLR & VR have separate janitorial contracts. Remainder of utilities for other entities in space.					

One-Stop Location:	Sioux Falls				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	170,283	139,728		3,535	313,546
Computer Services	25,198	20,676		523	46,397
Telecommunications	2,435	1,998		51	4,484
Janitorial	9,821	8,059		204	18,085
Electrical	16,543	13,575		343	30,461
Garbage/Sewer	2,973	2,439		62	5,474
Water	584	479		12	1,075
Natural Gas	2,524	2,071		52	4,647
Other Facility Costs	5,532	4,540		115	10,187
Total:	235,893	7,565	-	4,897	434,355
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>12,904</i>	<i>5,891</i>		<i>270</i>	<i>19,065</i>
Notes: DLR pays 20.23%, VR 14.76%, and NFJP 0.42% of utility and janitorial costs. Remainder of building and costs are to other entities.					

One-Stop Location:	Spearfish				Office
<u>Infrastructure Cost</u>	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	44,060	7,283			51,342
Computer Services	23,239	3,841			27,080
Telecommunications	4,730	782			5,511
Janitorial	7,239	1,197			8,435
Electrical	3,483	576			4,059
Garbage/Sewer	1,208	200			1,407
Water	466	77			542
Natural Gas	529	87			617
Other Facility Costs	2,358	390			2,747
Total:	87,310	14,431	-	-	101,742
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>3,692</i>	<i>610</i>			<i>4,302</i>
<i>Notes: DLR pays 83.37% and VR 13.78% of utility and janitorial costs of shared space. The remainder of the space is for a non-partner entity.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Vermillion				Office
<u>Infrastructure Cost</u>	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	30,940		5,732		36,672
Computer Services	14,831		2,747		17,578
Telecommunications	3,585		664		4,249
Janitorial	8,676		1,607		10,283
Electrical	1,934		358		2,292
Garbage/Sewer	191		35		226
Water	177		33		209
Natural Gas	684		127		811
Other Facility Costs	593		110		703
Total:	61,609	-	11,413	-	73,022
<i>Square Footage</i>	<i>2,446</i>		<i>453</i>		<i>2,899</i>
<i>Notes: DLR pays 84.37% and AEFLA 15.63% of utility and janitorial costs of shared space.</i>					

One-Stop Location:	Watertown				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	44,064	6,215	6,873		57,151
Computer Services	27,263	3,448	1,367		32,078
Telecommunications	8,591	1,087	431		10,108
Janitorial	9,555	1,597	1,768		12,920
Electrical	1,488	242	268		1,998
Garbage/Sewer	488	79	88		655
Water	71	12	13		96
Natural Gas	239	39	43		321
Other Facility Costs	2,728	375	416		3,519
Total:	94,485	13,093	11,265	-	118,844
Square Footage	5,077	716	792		6,585
Notes: DLR pays 24.61%, VR 4.00%, and AEFLA 4.43% of utility costs. For janitorial costs, DLR pays 23.94%, VR 4.00%, and AEFLA 4.43% with the remainder paid by other entities. For snow removal and other entire complex costs, DLR pays 18.83%, VR 2.59%, and AEFLA 2.87%.					

One-Stop Location:	Yankton				Office
Infrastructure Cost	<u>DLR</u>	<u>VR</u>	<u>AEFLA</u>	<u>NFJP</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rent	-		-		-
Computer Services	-		-		-
Telecommunications	1,848	1,680	-		3,528
Janitorial	-		-		-
Electrical	-		-		-
Garbage/Sewer	-		-		-
Water	-		-		-
Natural Gas	-		-		-
Other Facility Costs	-		-		-
Total:	1,848	1,680	-	-	3,528
Square Footage	1,684	1,296	-		2,980
Notes: The Kanner building is State-leased space. Estimated FY2021 rate is \$17.26 per square foot, but actual rate is dependent upon billing from the Bureau of Administration. Rate includes janitorial and utility costs.					

GRAND TOTAL:	1,306,627	308,834	23,680	4,897	1,644,038
---------------------	------------------	----------------	---------------	--------------	------------------